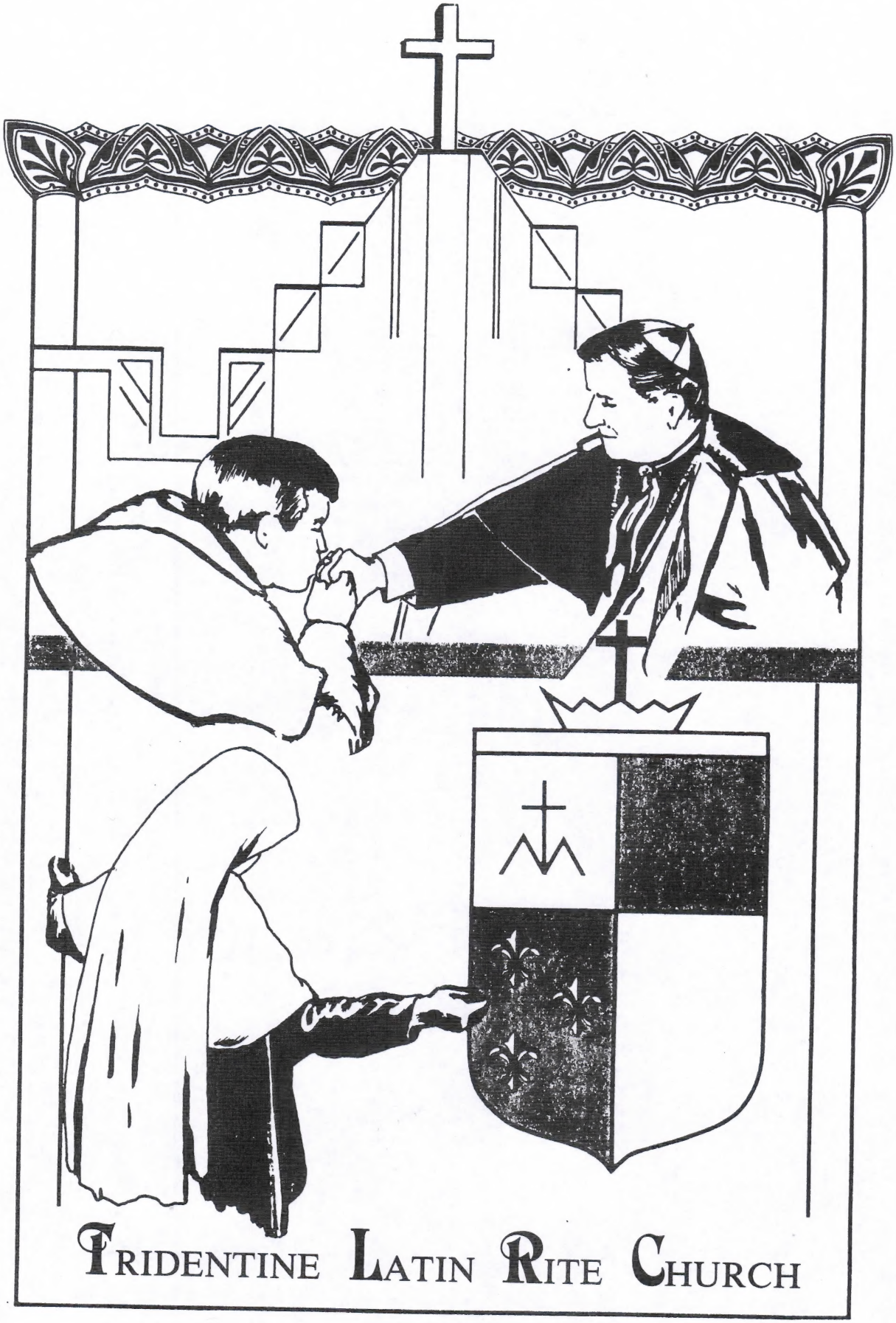
TRIDENTINE LATIN RITE CHURCH

Tridentine Latin Rite Church

by Bob Cubbage, Inland Register Reporter

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Contents

Introduction 1
Statement by Bishop Welsh 3
Purpose of series 3
TLRC and Infallibility 5
Chapter 1: Sect walks corridor of past 6
Chapter 2: 'Church in the catacombs' 10
Chapter 3: Political beliefs 10
Chapter 4: Land development dispute 14
Chapter 5: Members follow 'Christ crucified' 21
Chapter 6: Ex-members say sect a 'cult' 25
Chapter 7: Schuckardt's consecration 29
1985 update of TLRC 35

Photos by George de Saint-Rat

Cover artwork by Kathleen Monaghan

"Introduction to the 1986 Edition"

by Eric Meisfjord
Editor, Inland Register

The contents of this book originally appeared as articles in the *Inland Register*, diocesan newspaper of the Catholic Diocese of Spokane, Wash., edited by Msgr. John Donnelly and, later, by his successor, Paula LaBeck.

Since the book's original publication in 1980, the TLRC has been anything but quiet. Not only have its activities continued in the Inland Northwest, but the group has also branched out in efforts to gain international footholds.

Bob Cubbage, the reporter who first investigated and wrote the TLRC story, continued to keep abreast of the activities of the group. The story has remained a point of great interest to people of our region as well as other parts of the United States and the world.

As requests for additional copies of the book were filled and supplies from the original printing diminished, it became clear to all of us that we had a responsibility to the public not only to reprint the original material, but update the text as well. Hence this 1986 edition of *The Tridentine Latin Rite Church*.

Bob Cubbage did an admirable job of writing the original stories. His update, found at the end of this book, is equally incisive and well-grounded.

Except for the update found at the end of the book, the text appears as it did in the original edition. Please bear in mind that some titles and personnel within the Diocese of Spokane have changed over the years since the original edition.

I am proud to be a part of the oustanding journalistic tradition of the *Inland Register*, represented so well within these pages.

Cost: $4.00

Additional copies of this book may be obtained from The Inland Register, P.O. Box 48, Spokane, WA 99210-0048.

Statement on TLRC

by Bishop Lawrence Welsh

After much consultation and prayer, I have given approval for the *Inland Register* to publish the series of articles regarding the Fatima Crusaders, which begins in this issue. In the history of the Catholic Church, after almost every general Council there have been groups which have broken away from the mainstream of the church. They have done this in reaction to the restatement of the Christian tradition by the Fathers of that particular Council.

It is a very sad phenomenon but also very human. In faith we grieve to see the fabric of the church so divided. Our life as Christians is directed toward the unity of all men and women in Christ. Whatever divides the Church is to be mourned because it divides Christ himself.

Sincere

We are sure that the Catholics who have joined the Fatima Crusaders are sincere in their belief. The *Inland Register* series presents the sorrows, the traumas, and the difficulties they have experienced for the sake of their belief. They are seeking to do God's will as they understand it.

Yet, as Bishop of Spokane, I do not feel that I can stand by silently while people from this group cause confusion in the minds of some of our Catholic people.

The Fatima Crusaders or the Tridentine Latin Rite Church cannot be identified as a legitimate expression of the Roman Catholic faith. Their denial of the papacy as incorporated in the lives of the last four popes is a denial of the church itself. How can one believe in the presence of Christ in the church and the power of his Spirit while denying the concrete presence of the office of the Pope?

Not legitimately Catholics

There is no such thing as a legitimate expression of the Catholic tradition that is not in union with the Holy Father. The Fatima Crusaders are therefore not legitimately Catholics. Their celebration of the sacraments is not a legitimate part of the life of the church. Bishop Schuckardt has received no mission from the church universal and does not accept the unity of the apostolic office. Yet these are some of the very elements which make the Church Roman Catholic.

The past 18 years have been very challenging for the church. Given the direction by the bishops of the church in union with the Holy Father, Catholics have been about the difficult task of reform and renewal. There have been extreme reactions at times and clearly abuses at times, but guided by the official teaching office of the church it has sought to live by and to teach the mainstream of Catholic tradition as it has been known for 2,000 years.

As your bishop, I must caution you, the faithful of this diocese, to protect yourselves from any error including this effort by the Fatima Crusaders. Their presentation of Catholic tradition distorts the mainstream of Catholic faith by a certain selected historical perception of Catholic life. They take a far too pessimistic view of world order.

Teaching authority denied

Furthermore, they deny the teaching authority of the Second Vatican Council and the last four popes. Implicitly Bishop Schuckardt has set himself up as the final and last arbiter of Catholic tradition. This follows the pattern used by all so-called reformers of the past.

They are above the then current expression of Catholic tradition. History over and over again has demonstrated that such movements are not from the Holy Spirit. Whatever the admitted weaknesses and sinfulness of the Roman Catholic Church, the Fatima Crusaders stand opposed to the unity, Catholicity, and apostolicity of the church. I truly believe the series that begins this week (April 10, 1980) helps to identify this more clearly. I am grateful to Bob Cubbage and the *Inland Register* staff for their very competent and professional efforts to bring this story to the Catholic people of our diocese.

Purpose of Series

by Msgr. John Donnelly
Executive editor, *Inland Register*

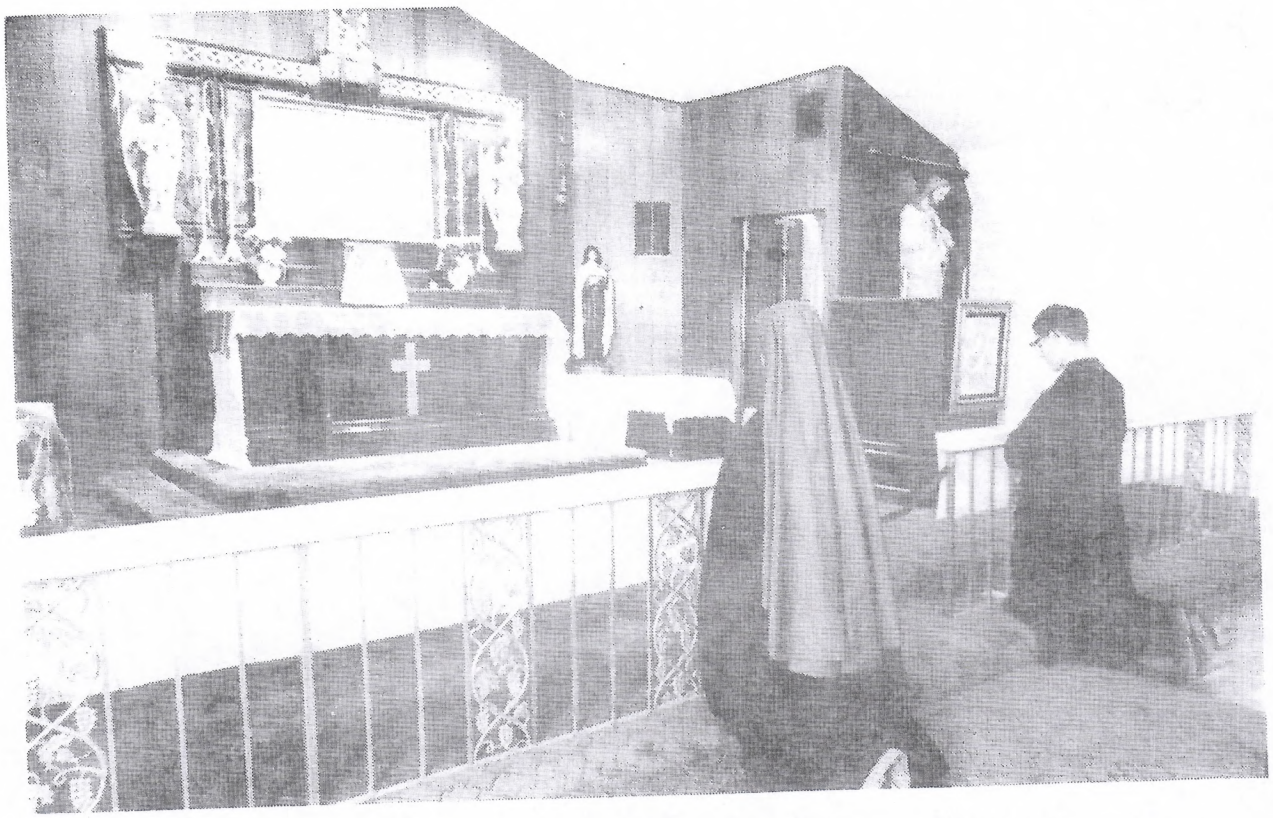
This series of articles about the Tridentine Latin Rite Church has been two years in the making. Five interviews with Bishop Francis Schuckardt, the church's leader, resulted from his own invitation that the *Inland Register* investigate his claims and the conduct of his membership.

To round out the information he gave us and preserve our own journalistic integrity and objectivity as far as was humanly possible, we have logged many miles, conducted more than 50 telephone and personal interviews, most of them with members and ex-members, and spent literally hundreds of hours researching, examining, evaluating and comparing various aspects of the controversies surrounding the church.

Then, when we had finished all this, we let the articles sit for several weeks, tore them apart and re-did them, added material that would further clarify, subtracted material that could in our judgment be falsely construed or needlessly hurtful.

Then we pondered and discussed further questions: Why print them at all? Why should a diocesan newspaper get into the business of publishing such controversial material regarding another church group? Why not leave it to the secular journals? Where is the charity in printing such painful divisions among people who are obviously sincere and dedicated to their beliefs?

The answers to these questions have not come easily. We have in fact bent over backwards in this series because of the demands of charity — done everything in our power to avoid being judgmental, taken every possible precaution to give the benefit of the doubt when facts tended to the ambiguous or the detrimental. But we have been faced also with the demands of truth, and our obligation to search out the truth. That is why



Dispute lingers on — **"The history of theology and liturgy is long and complex," states Father John Steiner, former director of liturgy for the Spokane Diocese. "Failure to recognize this has led the Tridentine Latin Rite Church to its extreme and erroneous position." The TLRC's conflict with the Roman Catholic Church shows little sign of settlement. Above, a TLRC nun and seminarian pray in the church's cathedral at the City of Mary.**

our work has been so painstakingly long in reaching completion; but it is also why we have concluded the need to publish.

The TLRC has about 800 followers in our reading area alone, and some 5,000 nationwide, according to Bishop Schuckardt. Many others apparently sympathize with it and support it financially. We believe these people have a right to know what the church teaches, and how it conducts its ministry. We also believe that such information should come from the leaders of the church themselves rather than second-hand wherever possible — and that is what we have tried to provide. We also believe that members and ex-members have some important information to offer regarding the effect of the church's teaching on them. We have tried to provide that as well, as objectively as possible, and from as wide a variety of viewpoints as possible.

As to the question of why a Catholic newspaper should be involved in all this, we think the answer is clear: our mandate is to provide our Catholic people with information and interpretation of events in the world as they relate to the church with the perspective which our faith offers us. There can be no question that the TLRC and its mission affect our church. It was in fact established as a repudiation of the present courses our church has taken; and in its teaching it takes a considerably divergent perspective from our own regarding our history and theology, however similar some of its practices might be to ours — past or present.

Throughout its 12-year history, none of the secular media has conducted a thorough investigation of the TLRC. They could hardly be expected to, since much of the controversy surrounding this church and its relationship with the Catholic Church lies in nuanced interpretations of theology, liturgy and ecclesiastical history which demand almost an "intermural" sensitivity.

All the more reason, we believe, why it is incumbent upon this newspaper to provide the technical investigative reporting required to be fair to both sides.

Bridge provided

We have enlisted a number of professionals in the various fields mentioned to help accomplish this, and our own staff has provided a bridge between theological experts and the media with its own professional competence in the specialized field of Catholic journalism. Whether we have succeeded in our objectives or not is up to you to judge. But be assured — both our readers and members of the TLRC — that we have sincerely tried to be fair and objective, and that we hold no animosity toward anyone involved in these matters.

If any one of our Catholic readers as a result of this series were to harbor animosity toward members of the TLRC, or to treat them with anything less than the kindness of Christ — we will have failed of our purpose. As followers of Christ, we can be content to stand by the wise words Gamaliel spoke to the Jewish Sanhedrin regarding the infant Christian church (Acts 5:38-39): "My advice is that you have nothing to do with these men. Let them alone. If their purpose or activity is human in its origins, it will destroy itself. If, on the other hand, it comes from God, you will not be able to destroy them without fighting God himself."

TLRC and infallibility

The Tridentine Latin Rite Church's conflict with the Roman Catholic Church shows little sign of settlement.

Perplexing questions concerning Catholicism separate the two groups: Can a church council like Vatican II — acting under the auspices of the pope — reform the Mass? Can a pope change the proclamations of past popes? Can a pope expound on and "develop" decrees on faith and morals handed down by his predecessors?

Asserting that past papal decrees and encyclicals are "infallible," TLRC officials answer "no" to the above. Spokesmen for the Roman Catholic Church say "Yes."

Always found on the sect's official literature, this symbol represents the Tridentine Latin Rite Church. The cross and the "M" symbolizes "to Jesus through Mary."

A recent book by a Roman Catholic priest summarizes the church's position on the above questions.

In his book, *The Once and Future Liturgy,* Father J.D. Crichton writes that past popes have changed supposedly binding decisions by their predecessors — including prohibitions concerning the Tridentine Mass. Vatican II replaced the Tridentine Mass with the "Norvus Ordo" (New Rite) Mass, which is now used worldwide.

"Throughout the centuries, popes have never felt bound by what their predecessors did," Father Crichton writes. "They have never thought their hands were tied . . . they have claimed the right to alter or reform the Roman liturgy.

"If what Paul VI, with the backing of a general council, has done is wrong, then all his predecessors were wrong, reaching back not merely to Pius V (who mandated the Tridentine Mass) but to Innocent II, to Gregory VII, to Gregory the Great, who added and subtracted things, to Vigilius, to Leo the Great, and beyond him probably to Damasus in the fourth century."

More than one pope has changed the Tridentine Mass, Father Crichton explains.

Changed three times

The so-called "fixed liturgy," decreed by the Council of Trent and carried out by Pope Pius V, was abridged and changed by Pope Clement VIII, who reigned from 1591 to 1605. The liturgy was also changed by Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644) and by Pope St. Pius X (1903-1914), who introduced a new phase of liturgical reform.

Pope Pius V, Clement VIII and Urban VIII all issued documents when they revised the Mass, saying their alterations were instituted ***ad perpetuam rei memoriam*** (the Latin inscription means "forever").

Notwithstanding, pre-Vatican II popes disregarded the mandates of their predecessors concerning revisions in the Tridentine Mass, according to Father Crichton's book and other research on church history.

Even outside Tridentine Mass revisions, there are numerous instances of one pope contradicting another pope's position before Vatican II.

Predecessor contradicted

For example: in 1336, Pope Benedict XII contradicted his predecessor Pope John XXII, who held that the souls of the just do not enjoy the intuitive vision of God until after the last judgment. In his bull, "Benedictus Deus," Benedict held that souls immediately see the divine essence with an intuitive and even facial vision.

Pope Pius XII, the last "true pope" in the TLRC's eyes, also contradicted his predecessors. One example: in 1955, Pope Pius refuted Pope Boniface VIII's pronouncement that all national kings were subordinate to the emperor and that the emperor's power in turn came from the pope. Pius XII called the assertion of Boniface, who reigned from 1294 to 1303, a "medieval conception conditioned by the period."

Moreover, canonization does not always guarantee a saint to be the perfect Catholic theologian for all time.

St. Cyprian, for example, held until his martyrdom in 258 that all reconciled heretics had to be re-baptized before being admitted back into the church — an unsound theological position.

"The time, thought patterns, religious culture and underlying assumptions within the context of history have to be taken into account when reading church decrees and writings by the saints," said Father Michael Savelesky, rector of Bishop White Seminary.

"The maturation of thought from one century to the next is also a very important consideration when studying church history," he added.

Within this context, popes have "developed" their predecessors' decrees on faith and morals," Father Savelesky said.

TLRC leaders argue this point saying papal encyclicals and other church decrees are infallible — and therefore cannot be altered or "developed."

Frater Denis Chicoine, TLRC vicar general, defended his church's stance by quoting Pope Pius XII's encyclical, "Humani Generis."

In the encyclical, Pope Pius XII writes, "Nor must it be thought that what is contained in encyclical letters does not of itself demand assent, on the pretext that the popes do not exercise in them the supreme power of their teaching authority."

This excerpt from "Humani Generis" is proof that all encyclicals on faith and morals should be viewed as infallible vehicles for the popes, claims Frater Chicoine.

Not so, explains Father Savelesky: "Pope Pius XII was addressing the views of those who argued that they did not have to heed church teachings unelss those teachings were declared infallible. He was not responding to those who were debating whether or not encyclicals were infallible teaching instruments."

Pope Pius XII understood that encyclicals are rarely used to promulgate dogma of the church in an infallible manner, he added.

"A pope only speaks infallibly when he distinctly declares he is speaking infallibly," Father Savelesky said, noting that such occasions are exteremely rare.

"Encyclicals and other pronouncements by the church should be seen as statements which offer guidance and enlightenment to individuals (both believers and non-believers) rather than viewed as an automatic blueprint for rigid behavior or thought. If that were the case, the encyclicals would neglect the conscience of individuals and their free, personal assent."

Serious consideration

At the same time, it is important to emphasize that "as a church document, an encyclical appeals for serious consideration by the faithful and our assent to it," Father Savelesky noted. "An encyclical is the pope speaking in the name of the church discussing the implications of God's revelation and is not ***per se*** God's final answer on the subject," he added.

Father John Steiner, director of liturgy for the Spokane Diocese, added that "the history of theology and liturgy is long and complex. Failure to recognize this has led the TLRC to its extreme and erroneous positions."

TLRC — Sect walks corridor of past

Chapter 1

A heavy marble sculpture of the Last Supper stands in the expansive library of Mount St. Michael. Members of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church (TLRC), who bought the former Jesuit seminary in 1977, discovered the shrine in a dusty corner of a Spokane pawnshop.

After bargaining with the pawnbroker, the church bought it. A sculptor restored the shrine by replacing the chipped fingers and robes of the apostles and repainting it.

In many ways, restoration of the sculpture is symbolic of the schismatic Latin-rite church, which has a nationwide membership of 5,000, about 800 of whom live in the Washington-Idaho area, according to the TLRC leaders.

Corridor of the past

Walking a closed corridor of the past, the TLRC clings to forms of liturgical worship, modes of dress and religious trappings that the Roman Catholic Church has been shedding since Vatican II.

Controversy has stalked the traditionalist sect ever since it was founded in Coeur d'Alene in 1968.

Headquartered at Mount St. Michaels in Spokane, the TLRC refuses to recognize the authority of any pope after Pope Pius XII. According to the TLRC teaching, Pope John XXIII was neither a "true" pope or a "false" pope but rather an "interim pope." His successors, Popes Paul VI, John Paul I and John Paul II are all "false popes."

The TLRC looks upon the Catholic Church after Vatican II "as a new religion and not true Catholicism, because the decrees of Vatican II and some of the recent decrees by Rome are in complete contradiction to past papal decrees and church doctrines," said Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt, leader of the Latin-rite church.

Revisions condemned

Chief among the changes condemned by the TLRC are revision in church and sacramental rituals, especially the substitution of the "Norvus Ordo" (New Rite), or "vernacular" Mass for the Tridentine Mass, which was standardized by the Council of Trent in 1568.

"Pope Paul was an invalid pope because a true pope would not implement these errors," Schuckardt charged.

These and other TLRC beliefs have led some bishops in the Northwest to issue statements pointing out the differences between the Tridentine Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

Acknowledging Catholics who have joined the TLRC are sincere in their beliefs, Bishop Lawrence Welsh issued an official statement this week saying the TLRC "cannot be identified as a legitimate expression of the Roman Catholic faith."

The TLRC's "denial of the papacy as incorporated in the lives of the last four popes is a denial of the church itself," Bishop Welsh said. "How can one believe in the presence of Christ in the church and the power of his Spirit while denying the concrete presence of the office of the pope?"

Bishop Welsh also commented on the TLRC's claim to orthodoxy.

Not legitimate

"There is no such thing as a legitimate expression of the Catholic tradition that is not in union with the Holy Father. The Fatima Crusaders are therefore not legitimately Catholic. Their celebration of the sacraments is not a legitimate part of the life of the church. Bishop Schuckardt has received no mission from the church universal and does not accept the unity of the apostolic office. Yet these are some of the very elements which make the church (Roman) Catholic."

Bishop Welsh cautioned Catholics in the Spokane Diocese to protect themselves from errors involving Catholic tradition found in the TLRC and other schismatic sects.

"The TLRC's presentation of Catholic tradition distorts the mainstream of Catholic faith by a certain selected historical perception of Catholic life," he said. "They take a far too pessimistic view of world order. Furthermore, they deny the teaching authority of the Second Vatican Council and the last four popes.

"Implicitly, Bishop Schuckardt has set himself up as the final and last arbiter of Catholic tradition," Bishop Welsh continued. "This follows the pattern used by all so-called reformers of the past. They are above the then current expression of Catholic tradition.

"History has repeatedly demonstrated that such movements are not from the Holy Spirit. Whatever the admitted weaknesses and sinfulness of the Roman Catholic Church, the Fatima Crusaders stand opposed to the unity, Catholicity and apostolicity of the church," Bishop Welsh said.

Retired Bishop Bernard Topel of the Spokane Diocese said: "It is important to point out that members of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church do not belong to the same church that I do. Nor do they belong to the same church that St. Peter, St. Francis DeSales and Pope Pius XII belonged to.

"If a Catholic should join this group, that person is no longer a member of our Catholic Church. Nor does attendance at their services fulfill a Catholic's obligation to worship," he said.

No longer part of church

Bishop Sylvester Treinen of the Boise Diocese in Idaho, where a majority of the church members still live although many are moving to Spokane, has said the TLRC "is no longer part of the Roman Catholic Church" because of its rejection of Pope Paul VI and his successors.

The TLRC is not part of any other traditionalist group or schismatic church. Contrary to popular belief, the TLRC is not affiliated with Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and his Society of St. Pius X movement in the United States and Europe.

The 73-year-old French-born archbishop opposes the Second Vatican Council's decree on religious freedom and liturgical reforms. Pope Paul suspended him from the priestly ministry in 1976 because of his opposition to church reforms.

"Lefebvre is maintaining that Montini (Schuckardt call Pope Paul VI by his family name) and his successors are tru popes but are leading the church into error. We think that thi is blasphemy and heresy. If we believed that Montini was true pope, then we would have to follow him . . . , Schuckardt said.

"Some people have the impression that because we don accept Vatican II, Montini (and John Paul), we don't belie in the papacy. That is absolutely incorrect. We firmly belie in the papacy and its infallibility."

The TLRC is continually seeking converts to what they co sider to be the Catholic Church in "interregnum," whi traditionally is the period between the death of a pope and t election of his successor.

The apostolic fervor of its members has spread through the country.

Chapels which serve some of the larger TLRC communi outside the Idaho-Washington area have been establishec Los Angeles, San Diego, Phoenix, Omaha and Color Springs.

"We also have small groups of members located in virtu every state of the country," Schuckardt said.

The seven TLRC priests, six of whom were ordainec Schuckardt, and Schuckardt make individual visits to followers at chapels in other cities at least four times a ye bring the sacraments, Schuckardt said.

Tridentine Sect — **Surrounded by men and women Religious in the Tridentine Latin Rite Church (TLRC), Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt, TLRC founder and leader (in dark robes and skullcap), prepares for a ceremony rededicating Mount St. Michael, the group's headquarters. The TLRC, commonly known as the Fatima Crusaders, purchased the former Jesuit seminary north of Spokane in 1977.**

Study groups

In between missionary visits, the small groups of believers meet together in "cell" (study) groups to recite the rosary, study Scripture and papal encyclicals, and strengthen each other in the faith. They also attempt to bring in new members.

The majority of the TLRC's 5,000 members in this country live in the same cities as the TLRC chapels, Schuckardt said. The sect's largest congregation, 800 followers, is divided among Coeur d'Alene, Spokane and Rathdrum, Idaho, where the TLRC owns a 100-acre site called the "City of Mary." The sect also has approximately 150 members in the Seattle area.

A convent, girls' school and a "cathedral" are located at the "City of Mary." Two more convents, a seminary, girls' high school, rectory, priory, chapel and a bookstore are housed in eight converted buildings in Coeur d'Alene. Most (if not all) of these buildings will be sold in the near future as the TLRC completes its move to Spokane, a TLRC spokesman said.

The group's mailing list holds over 10,000 names.

Mansion purchased

It has also purchased a mansion on Spokane's south side to serve as a chancery for Schuckardt.

Buildings on TLRC property in Spokane and Idaho house the 52 men who are "fraters," or male Religious, in the TLRC. The TLRC seminary is now located at Mount St. Michael. A high school for boys is part of the seminary.

Approximately 200 youths attended the TLRC primary and secondary schools, said Frater Louis Marie, vice-president of the boys high school.

The church's 82 Sisters live in the convents at Rathdrum and Coeur d'Alene. The TLRC plans to build a convent on the Mount St. Michael acreage in the near future.

The TLRC administers approximately $3 million worth of land and property in Washington and Idaho, according to official records and other sources.

Title misnomer

Although TLRC members are often called "Fatima Crusaders," that title is a misnomer, Schuckardt said. The name denotes "an apostolate of the TLRC and not the church itself," he said. Members of the Fatima apostolate try to live up to the requirements for a holy life made by the Blessed Virgin Mary in her Fatima appearances in 1917, he said.

The TLRC is also known by the name "Mary, Immaculate Queen of the Universe Community." It is incorporated in the State of Idaho as "Christ the King Priory." In Washington, it is incorporated under the title "Tridentine Latin Rite Catholic Church of St. Joseph."

Other TLRC titles appear in its mailing literature: "Our Lady of Fatima Crusade," "The Reign of Mary" (which is

TLRC Book Store — **A woman Religious stands amid statues and Catholic literature in the Tridentine Latin Rite Church's community center and book store in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.**

also the title of its official newsletter) and the "Catholic Catechetical Center."

Although the church has several titles, what Spokane-area residents have come to know as the Tridentine Latin Rite Church began in Coeur d'Alene in 1968.

Ousted from Blue Army

Schuckardt, then an internationally known speaker from the Blue Army of Our Lady, a conservative Marian apostolic group, was ousted from that organization because of his public condemnation of Pope Paul VI and Vatican II. He then started his own version of the Blue Army called the Fatima Crusade. Schuckardt's followers had assumed the name Tridentine Latin Rite Church by the mid-1970s.

The TLRC's dispute with the Roman Catholic Church seems to be a bitter one. In tape recordings of TLRC seminars held in California in the late 1960s, a TLRC lecturer referred to Roman Catholic parishes as "synagogues of Satan" and the Holy Eucharist consecrated by Catholic priests as "bread from Satan's table."

When TLRC leaders and members make annual pilgrimages to Marian shrines in Europe, a TLRC priest will often "exorcise" the shrine from the "evil influences of the Roman Catholic Masses that have been said there," according to a former member.

Catholic priests and other officials at the shrine are often unaware of who the Tridentines are so they give them permission to recite a Mass at the shrine not knowing it is a Tridentine Mass, forbidden by church law, said the ex-member.

Physical confrontations involving the TLRC have taken place in Idaho and Spokane."

Battery charge

Kootenai County Court records show that a Religious Sister in the TLRC was convicted of a battery charge in 1976 after she had tried to protect another Sister from her mother, a former church member, in a confrontation on Coeur d'Alene streets.

The father of another TLRC Sister was placed on probation by the same court after knocking a Religious Sister to the ground while kidnapping his daughter from her convent in Coeur d'Alene. Police released the kidnapped Sister from her parents at their family home. The daughter did not file any charges against her parents for the kidnapping.

John Tamplin, an ex-TLRC member and a Rathdrum, Idaho resident, has been involved in several quarrels with TLRC members. Tamplin, who drives a pick-up truck carrying signs denouncing the TLRC as a "satanic cult" and Schuckardt as a "false bishop," said that on several occasions, TLRC members have thrown paint on, or torn down, his signs while he and his daughter, Mrs. Margie Skarisky, were picketing the TLRC in Idaho and at Mount St. Michael.

On Oct. 16, 1979, the Spokane County Superior Court granted the TLRC a permanent injunction barring Tamplin and his daughter from parking their truck on a "loop road" near the entrance of Mount St. Michael, which the judge ruled is the property of the church.

Saddened by argument

TLRC members have said they "regret and are saddened" by the argument involving Tamplin and his truck. "The bold wording on some of the signs provoke members who love their church and do not want to see it maligned," said Thomas Drahman, a TLRC member.

The Superior Court decision does not prohibit Tamplin from displaying his signs or from legally parking on a county road near Mount St. Michael. Tamplin said at the trial that he fears "for his life" to go near the Mount again.

Schuckardt says these and other arguments involving TLRC members and ex-members have made the church appear in a poor light with the public.

News reports have been filled with distortions. Schuckardt said, referring to charges from former members that the TLRC brainwashes its members, tears families apart, operates as a cult, uses too strict discipline with students in its schools and bilks its followers of their hard-earned dollars.

Schuckardt and other spokesmen for the TLRC deny these charges vehemently. They blame bad press on "embittered ex-members who are lying about the TLRC and its practices." Still, critics clamor for more public scrutiny of the traditionalist sect.

"We have never searched for controversy but it always seems to find us wherever we go," said one of the church's Religious Brothers.

The Brother's words have proven true so far. The church at Mount St. Michael is currently involved in a property dispute with its neighbors that shows no clear sailing for them in the months ahead. Another article in this series will explore this controversy further.

Runaway boys

These same neighbors have also reported incidents involving runaway boys from the Mount's boarding school to the Spokane County Sheriff's Office.

Former students say disciplinary measures employed by instructors at the Mount are "too harsh."

Religious Brothers at the Mount have shaved the heads of students if they break certain rules at the school, former students say. These rules include associating with girls, listening to "hard-rock" music, associating with ex-members and leaving the Mount without permission.

Students are often slapped across the face by instructors and other school personnel for "minor infractions," the sources add. A student will be slapped, sometimes repeatedly, by one of the Religious Brothers for "talking back" to a superior or not having their homework completed, among other infractions, the ex-students say.

TLRC leaders have "forced parents to cooperate with school disciplinary measures," the ex-students say. The church leaders have suspended families from sacraments when they have not cooperated with school disciplinary measures, the sources, who asked to remain anonymous, say.

The vice-president of the Mount's high school acknowledges that the above incidents do occur at the Mount although he denies they are "a common thing here."

"Corporal punishment is only used for serious and ongoing public misconduct by the student," Frater Louis Marie said, denying that one single incident, such as a student's failure to complete his homework assignment, will merit an automatic slap across the face.

Students have been slapped for showing "visible disrespect for a Religious superior because he is insulting the religious office of the Brother, and not the Brother himself," Frater Louis said.

"If you are concerned with souls, sometimes you have to take a drastic remedy to make a student do what he is supposed to do, or else decide that he should get out of the community," Frater Louis said, explaining the school's philosophy on corporal punishment.

Charges rebutted

Parents of students are suspended from the sacraments only when their "son refuses to return to our school or attends a public school and still lives at home," Frater Louis said in response to charges from ex-students.

Popes have taught that Catholic youths are required to attend Catholic schools, Frater Louis said.

"If TLRC members refuse to send their children to our school without valid reasons, or if they permit their children to live at home without attending any school at all, that family is creating a public scandal and they will be denied communion in our church," Frater Louis said.

Frater Louis Marie

The question of excessive school discipline has also been raised by other former members of the TLRC. Their statements and court reports indicate that grade school students have been mistreated in the TLRC schools.

On Oct. 26, 1976, Frater Paul Welsh was sentenced to serve five days in the Kootenai County Jail for excessive spanking of a 10-year-old student in April of that year. The Religious Brother was also placed on probation for two years by Judge A.H. Parisot, according to court records.

Another incident involving mistreatment of children in TLRC schools took place in 1973 at the St. Louis de Montfort School for boys, then located in Rathdrum, Idaho.

Students punished

Approximately 35 boys were twice given 40 hacks each with a wooden paddle because they failed class assignments, said Mrs. Jean Case, an ex-member and mother of a son who was spanked.

Her comments have been corroborated by other ex-members.

When questioned about the latter incident, Bishop Schuckardt said: "I was completely unaware of the student abuse because I was in the hospital at the time. We removed the teacher from his teaching position as soon as we verified the incidents."

Explaining his philosophy on corporal punishment of children in schools, Schuckardt said: "I have always told the teachers in my school that they should be able to keep order in the classroom without the use of corporal punishment. There are times when corporal punishment is necessary, however."

Statements by members and ex-members concerning TLRC school and church policy will often contradict each other. Future articles will explore these areas.

'Church in the catacombs'

Chapter 2

The Tridentine Latin Rite Church's ongoing feud with the Roman Catholic Church is not confined simply to a quarrel over religious doctrine.

Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt, leader of the sect, and other officials of the TLRC teach that sinister events lay behind the Catholic Church's decision to call Vatican II in 1962 — a council they contend destroyed true Catholicism.

Papal assassination

A papal assassination and a subversive attack on the church by conspirators to install false popes are among the events that laid the groundwork for Vatican II. The council was the final step in a sophisticated plot by the church's enemies to exterminate the Catholic religion and replace it with an "antichrist religion," says Tridentine leaders.

Consequently, the TLRC, headquartered at Mount St. Michaels in north Spokane, believes its small band of followers form the only true Catholic Church in existence. TLRC membership totals nearly 5,000 nationwide, with 800 living in the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene area, leaders say.

Church members also contend that the papal lineage from St. Peter to Pope Pius XII, the last pope before Vatican II, continues exclusively with them.

Biblical prophecy

Leaders of the schismatic sect defend their position by saying the alleged fall of the Roman Catholic Church is a fulfillment of biblical prophecy concerning the last days of man before Christ's Second Coming.

'The Freemasonic conspiracy'

The Catholic Church has been destroyed by conspirators who devised a plot nearly two centuries ago to infiltrate and overthrow the church from within, say Tridentine leaders.

Schuckardt has acknowledged these conspirators murdered Pope Pius XII in order to seize final control of the church.

The TLRC leader claims the conspirators are elite members of the international society of Freemasonry. The Freemasons are now in complete control of the worldwide Catholic Church, he said.

An ex-member of the TLRC, Daniel Wilson (pseudonym), said he was taught in the TLRC high school that a "Masonic secret sect named the Carbonari" helped plot to overthrow the Catholic Church as early as 1820 in Europe." The Carbonari planned to corrupt the Catholic faithful by infiltrating the ranks of the clergy, he said.

False doctrines

After infiltrating the Roman Catholic Church and winning appointments to influential church positions, the Freemasons gradually introduced false doctrines into the church until these heresies culminated in Vatican II, the ex-student said he was taught in the TLRC.

Vatican II, according to TLRC beliefs, completely annihilated the Catholic faith by introducing heretical doctrines and overturning infallible precepts laid down by past popes.

"The upper echelons of the international society of Freemasony are definitely involved in the Freemasonic conspiracy" to corrupt and control the church, Bishop Schuckardt said in an interview.

"How much the average Freemason on the street knows about the conspiracy, I do not know," the TLRC prelate added.

"We believe the present Roman Catholic Church is an entirely new religion based on humanism rather than the truth of God," said Frater (the Latin word means "brother") Denis Chicoine, TLRC vicar general.

Pope said poisoned

According to an article in the *Reign of Mary*, the TLRC official newsletter, the Freemasons finally grabbed the reins of the church in 1958 by poisoning Pope Pius XII, the "last true Catholic vicar," in the TLRC's eyes.

Schuckardt claims Pope Pius XII knew of the Freemasonic invasion of the Catholic Church.

"He let the College of Cardinals fall to its lowest number in modern history because he did not trust the Catholic bishops and officials working in the church enough to appoint them to the college," Schuckardt said.

The murder of Pope Pius XII paved the way for the election of an "interim pope," John XXIII, and then the Catholic Church's first "false pope" of modern times, Cardinal Giovanni Montini who became Pope Paul VI in 1963, Schuckardt said.

He declined to say whether or not Pope Paul was an active Freemasonic conspirator.

Former TLRC members, however, claim Bishop Schuckardt has preached that Pope Paul VI was indeed a Freemason.

One ex-member showed a copy of the *Reign of Mary* in which Pope Paul is referred to as the "Grand Masonic Luciferian Master," to support this allegation.

Pope John Paul II is "carrying out the Freemasonic principles of the infiltrated church," Schuckardt said, adding: "I am still observing him to see whether or not he is a knowing instrument of the Freemasons."

The ultimate goal of the Freemasons is to form a one-world humanistic religion from all the existing religions in the world, according to Tridentine beliefs. The TLRC also envisions a one-world government being established as a counterpart to this one-world religion.

Commenting on the Tridentine teaching, Toby Johnsen, Grand Master of the Grand Masonic Lodge of Washington State, said, "there is no truth whatsoever" to Schuckardt's allegation that Freemasons are in control of the Catholic Church.

Father John Steiner, director of liturgy for the Spokane Diocese, said the TLRC's theory on a Free-masonic takeover of the Roman Catholic Church is "nonsense." He declined to make any further comment on the subject saying it was "too ridiculous to pursue."

The international secret society of Freemasonry, a virulent opponent of the Roman Catholic Church at one point in history, has been strongly censured by past popes, among them Leo XIII, Pius IX and Clement XII.

No recent censure

Freemasonry, however, has not incurred any strong censure from recent popes, because it is generally accepted by church officials that Masons are no longer engaged in a campaign to destroy or hinder the church.

But Schuckardt still maintains that the Freemasons have taken over the church. Similar conspiracy theories have also been espoused by other separatist Catholic groups. The Tridentine bishop points to Vatican II as evidence for this conspiracy.

The new laws and decrees of Vatican II are in conflict with what Schuckardt claims are infallible statements from previous church councils, past papal encyclicals and other papal pronouncements.

The 42-year-old prelate has convinced many people that Pope John XXIII and his successors had no right to reform the Mass and other church rituals at Vatican II.

Church started in 1968

Schuckardt broke away from the church in 1968 with seven

City of Mary — **Located on a remote mountaintop in Rathdrum, Idaho, the City of Mary is an ideal place for worship and solitude. The Tridentine Latin Rite Church's cathedral (pictured above), is located at the City of Mary as well as the girls grade school and a large convent for the Sisters. All buildings were constructed by member. The TLRC owns 100 acres on the hilltop.**

followers. One dilapidated building in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, served as church headquarters.

In only 12 years, he has acquired over 800 followers in this area alone, as well as nearly 1,000 acres in church property in Washington and Idaho states and a half-dozen chapels across the United States.

He and his members are skilled at citing pre-Vatican II documents (such as Pope St. Pius X's encyclical on Modernism) to point out what they believe are glaring contradictions to church statements after Vatican II.

TLRC members however, have been accused of taking quotations out of their historical and cultural context and deliberately ignoring the historical evidence of other reforms and renewals in the church, as well as confusing infallible decrees of popes with less authoritative documents.

Criteria inconsistent

The TLRC's "criteria for orthodoxy and dogmatic understanding are not consistent with the long tradition of the church," said Father Steiner, explaining that he believes the sect "erroneously teaches a selective form of Catholic instruction."

"The ordinary teaching criteria of the church give weight to four important areas of tradition: Sacred Scripture, the writings of the Fathers of the Church, the teachings of the councils, and the 'ordinary magisterium,' which is the teaching authority of the Holy Father and the bishops," Father Steiner said.

"In order to be faithful to the theological traditions of the church, one must seek to find that constant thread of truth which links the present and the past in the church's teachings." (See side-bar article.)

The TLRC also teaches an extended definition of papal infallibility, Father Steiner continued.

"Since the time papal infallibility was defined at Vatican I in 1870, the church has made only one infallible statement and that was on the Assumption. Obviously, this was not changed by Vatican II," he said.

Certain disciplines were changed and certain teachings were restated in more understandable language at Vatican II. Moreover, the church has the right to mandate the discipline of the Mass and the sacraments. A denial of the pontiff's prerogative to do this is a heretical doctrinal position regarding the power of the church," Father Steiner said.

Schuckardt, however, preaches that the TLRC is the only true organized Catholic Church and that it is now only a "remnant church."

'The church in the catacombs'

TLRC members look upon Schuckardt as God's chosen instrument to save the church from destruction as a result of the Freemasonic invasion and the Vatican II decrees. The only true leaders of the Catholic Church for the past 40 years, in their eyes, are Pope Pius XII and Schuckardt.

Accordingly, the TLRC leaders preach that the 739 million Roman Catholics in the world today are apostates who have excommunicated themselves by acknowledging Pope John XXIII and his successors as true vicars of Christ and by accepting Vatican II decrees.

With Paul VI's election to the papacy, "the true Roman Catholic Church magisterium and the true Catholic laity were exiled into the catacombs where they remain to this day," states an article in the *Reign of Mary*.

The task of directing "the church in the catacombs" has fallen on the shoulders of Francis K. Schuckardt — a mission that he states emphatically he neither sought nor desired. It is a commonly held belief among Tridentine members that divine providence forced this role upon their mentor.

If not a pope, Schuckardt is literally the "last true Roman Catholic bishop left on the face of the earth," his followers believe. Schuckardt accepts this designation but qualifies it with the words: " . . . as far as we know at this time."

Schuckardt was ordained and consecrated in 1971 by a bishop from a schismatic Catholic sect. Founded in Holland, the sect of Schuckardt's consecrator broke away from Rome in 1723. Called the Church of Utrecht at the time of its schism, the sect is now known in America under the title of the Old Roman Catholic Church.

The man who consecrated Schuckardt, Bishop Daniel Q. Brown of Toledo, Ohio, reportedly renounced his heretical affiliation with the Old Roman Catholic Church and made a "profession of faith" to the "true" Roman Catholic Church before consecrating Schuckardt a priest and bishop in Chicago.

Schuckardt's ordination and consecration, however, are not recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. (Schuckardt's consecration will be further examined in the last article of this series.)

Adrift from the Roman Catholic Church, Bishop Schuckardt now directs the TLRC's ordinary and solemn teaching magisterium — which has historically and ultimately been under the leadership of the pope.

The following excerpt from a confidential newsletter to TLRC members from church leaders illustrates this belief in the nature of the TLRC and the episcopacy of their prelate:

" . . . Those who have attacked or rejected the providentially provided magisterium of the 'church in the catacombs' falls under . . . automatic excommunication. Commend such pitiable souls to the Merciful Heart of Mary, for the church infallibly teaches that unless they repent and are absolved by the bishop before death, they are assuredly and eternally damned."

All members take an "abjuration of error" before acceptance into the TLRC. The abjuration of error is patterned after the Roman Catholic Church's traditional abjuration of heresy, which is a renunciation under oath of an apostacy, heresy or schism using a certain formula. The TLRC version, however, adds a few lines at the end of the oath repudiating the Holy See in Rome, Bishop Schuckardt said.

Sacraments administered again

New members joining the church are required to receive the sacraments of Matrimony, Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders (if applicable) again, if these sacraments were administered to them at the time of, or after, Vatican II.

Besides claiming to hold the only true sacraments, the Tridentines also believe the Roman Catholic Church is now in a state of interregnum, a period between popes, and that their own ranks will produce the true successor to Pius XII.

In addition to waiting for a new pope to emerge from its ranks, the TLRC is expecting the end of the world and Christ's Second Coming in the near future.

'The latter days'

TLRC leaders say current world and religious events are fulfillments of biblical prophecy concerning the last days of man.

By accepting Vatican II, today's Roman Catholics are casualties of the "great apostacy" predicted by St. Paul when he wrote that the end of the world will not come "unless there first comes a falling away" (2 Thessalonians 2:3), the Tridentines believe.

This "deception of the elect," besides blinding Rome and the Mystical Body, is also seducing world political and religious leaders, causing another fulfillment of St. Paul's prophecy: "God has allowed them to believe error and lies as punishment for not loving the truth" (2 Thessalonians 2:11), said Frater Chicoine.

One-world church

This domination of falsehood over truth will result in a one-world church (based on the philosophy of humanism) as well as a one-world government, he added.

Fatima Children — **The three children who reported apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima in 1917, in a photo taken shortly after the event, are (left to right) Jacinta Marto, 7, her brother Francisco, 9, and their cousin Lucia dos Santos, 11. Sister Lucia, a Carmelite nun and the only survivor of the three, is now living in a convent in Tuy, Spain. (NC Photo)**

The United Nations, "which we believe is a communist organization," will play a key role in founding this one-world government, Frater Chicoine noted.

The antichrist, an evil world leader, will take control of this dual civil-religious institution, he continued. The antichrist will have "authority over race and people, language and nation" as prophesied in Revelations.

"We are primarily concentrating on building spiritual fortitude in our members so that we may survive the increasing trials we envision as the world draws to an end and Christ returns to establish his Kingdom," he said.

Many Christian fundamentalist groups have cited similar "end-times" theories. The Tridentines, however, augment the belief that they are living in the latter days with predictions by the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima and other apparitions.

Besides noting these apocalyptic revelations by the Blessed Virgin Mary at some of her apparitions, Bishop Schuckardt said he believes that the "Third Secret of Fatima" has been revealed and that this secret pinpoints the latter half of the 20th century as a time of "a great punishment which will sweep over the entire human race," he said.

The punishment will come in the form of a "great war . . . where millions of men will perish from hour to hour and those who survive will envy those who have perished," states certain portions of the alleged secret which Schuckardt has made available to his followers.

Three secrets were given to the children who witnessed the apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima, Portugal in 1917. The first two secrets were quickly related to church officials, but the third secret was written down by the eldest of the youngsters, Lucia, and given to the bishop of Fatima who later forwarded the letter to the Vatican. It was reported that Lucia had decided that the letter would not be opened until 1960. When Pope John XXIII read the letter in that year, according to fairly reliable reports, he decided not to make the contents public.

The supposed text of the "Third Secret of Fatima" first appeared in a German newspaper in 1963, sources say. It gained extensive international press coverage about 10 yers ago, but the authenticity of this purported message from Fatima has been denied by church authorities.

Schuckardt said the one-world government will trigger the great calamity predicted in the Fatima secret.

Father John Steiner, responding to TLRC theories on the end of the world and Fatima predictions, said, "There has never been any official church teaching on recognizing the time of the latter days of Christ's Second Coming."

Rome also does not require Catholics to believe the revelations at Fatima or other apparitions as a matter of doctrine, he noted.

"The third secret of Fatima has not been revealed by the pope," he continued.

Martyrdom expected

Nevertheless, TLRC leaders believe and teach their last-day theories as fact, ex-members say. They instruct their followers to remain steadfast in their Catholic dogma and practices so they may withstand the coming persecution of the one-world government. Some of the Tridentines expect to face martyrdom, said one TLRC layman.

"Whatever may happen, we will remain true Catholics until the last member," Bishop Schuckardt said.

TLRC printer — **With over 10,000 supporters on its mailing list, the Tridentine Latin Rite Church, headquartered at Mount Saint Michaels, prints and mails out a large amount of literature and periodicals. The TLRC also operates a mail order business for books and periodicals. Above, a TLRC religious brother prepares a press to print programs for a church function to be held that same evening. The TLRC's print shop is located at Mount Saint Michaels.**

Political beliefs

Chapter 3

Controversy surrounding the separatist Tridentine Latin Rite Church (TLRC) is not limited to religious beliefs. The church's traditional beliefs also extend into the political arena.

Former members claim an anti-Jewish and anti-American philosophy is incorporated into the TLRC's political teachings.

Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt, TLRC leader, and other church instructors use isolated papal decrees and encyclicals from Roman Catholic Church history to support these political teachings, ex-members charge.

Requested by members

Certain political books are listed in TLRC publications and sold in the TLRC bookstore because "members requested that we include these books," Schuckardt said.

Two parts of Bishop Schuckardt's political philosophy which former members say are particularly distasteful include:

• the teaching that America is a "Freemasonic Republic" and that it is anti-Catholic to support the U.S. government or honor the American flag:

• the position that modern Jews are not of the same lineage as the Old Testament Jews and that a powerful group of Jews, known as Zionists, is involved in a clandestine plot to take over the world and destroy Christian morality.

This article will explore these two areas.

'The Freemasonic Republic'

The TLRC rejects the United States government, the fundamental precept of democracy, and the historical data concerning the founding of this nation, Bishop Schuckardt said.

"The principles of democracy and Catholicism are irreconcilable," Bishop Schuckardt said. "The Roman Catholic Church has always taught that there are absolute rights and absolute wrongs, but democracy states that the majority is always right," Schuckardt said, explaining his rejection of America's government.

"I am not saying that every facet of the government is anti-Christian," Bishop Schuckardt clarified. "But certain rulings of the U.S. government are definitely prejudiced against Catholicism and do not respect the law of God. Any true government has to respect the law of God as the ultimate truth," he said.

The ideal government is a Catholic monarchy, he added.

Moreover, "America was founded by Freemasons," Schuckardt said, claiming that the humanistic philosophy of Freemasonry, along with its Catholic antipathies, has been incorporated into the U.S. government.

Freemasonry is an oath-bound fraternal order of men directly descended from the lodges of stonemasons and cathedral builders of the Middle Ages.

In the 16th century, Freemasons began to embrace social and philosophical issues rather than the craft of masonry, according to the *Encyclopedia Americana.* In the 18th and 19th centuries, Freemasonic goals and beliefs became bitterly hostile towards Catholicism, prompting several popes to publicly condemn the international society.

Open antagonism between the Freemasons and the Catholic Church, however, has diminished in this century.

Schuckardt and TLRC high school teachers claim Freemasons control America because George Washington and other early presidents were Freemasons; the pyramid and all-seeing eye emblem on the $1 bill is from Freemasonic origins; the democratic system was developed by Thomas Paine and Rousseau, who were Freemasons; and 55 of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence were Freemasons, among other arguments advanced by the TLRC.

Reference sources, Freemasons and historians challenge these alleged assertions by Schuckardt and TLRC instructors.

The *Encyclopedia Americana* states, "Of the 56 signers . . . nine are clearly identified as Freemasons — and some authorities include five to 10 more.

"Freemasons did not found this country," said Toby Johnsen, grand master of the Grand Lodge of Washington State in a telephone interview. "Freemasons were only seeking freedom from British oppression like other Americans in 1776," he said.

Robert Carriker, a history professor at Gonzaga University, also disagrees, saying Schuckardt's version of American history is "an unfair way to treat history."

"If one can call this country a Freemasonic republic because Freemasons were involved in founding it, why not call it a 'business' or 'middle-aged man's' republic because most of the Founding Fathers were businessmen with an average age of 43," Carriker said.

Nor is Schuckardt's opinion that democracy is anti-Catholic shared by Roman Catholics.

Catholic principles

Many elements in democracy such as equality before the law, equality of opportunity, freedom of speech, press and assembly, and freedom from arbitrary arrest and punishment are all essential Catholic principles, said Father Michael Savelesky, rector of Bishop White Seminary, and other Catholic defenders of the democratic form of government.

Catholics do, however, reject the theory that every decision by popular or judicial vote constitutes a guarantee of moral rectitude, he said.

Although they reject its government, Bishop Schuckardt said he and the TLRC members love America.

"I love America and our desire for our country is that she be converted to the Catholic faith," he said. The TLRC has designed its own flag in honor of Mary, the patroness of America, to show its love and allegiance to the United States, Schuckardt said. This substitutes for the American flag in their church.

Grim origins

The American flag is not displayed in the TLRC because some members feel the red, white and blue flag colors are derived from grim Freemasonic origins, Schuckardt continued.

"The red in the flag symbolizes the blood of priests, bishops and nuns who were nailed to convent doors and murdered by Freemasons in their revolts against Catholic monarchies in Europe," Schuckardt said.

The grand master of Washington's Freemasons disagrees with the Tridentine leader's interpretation of the flag colors.

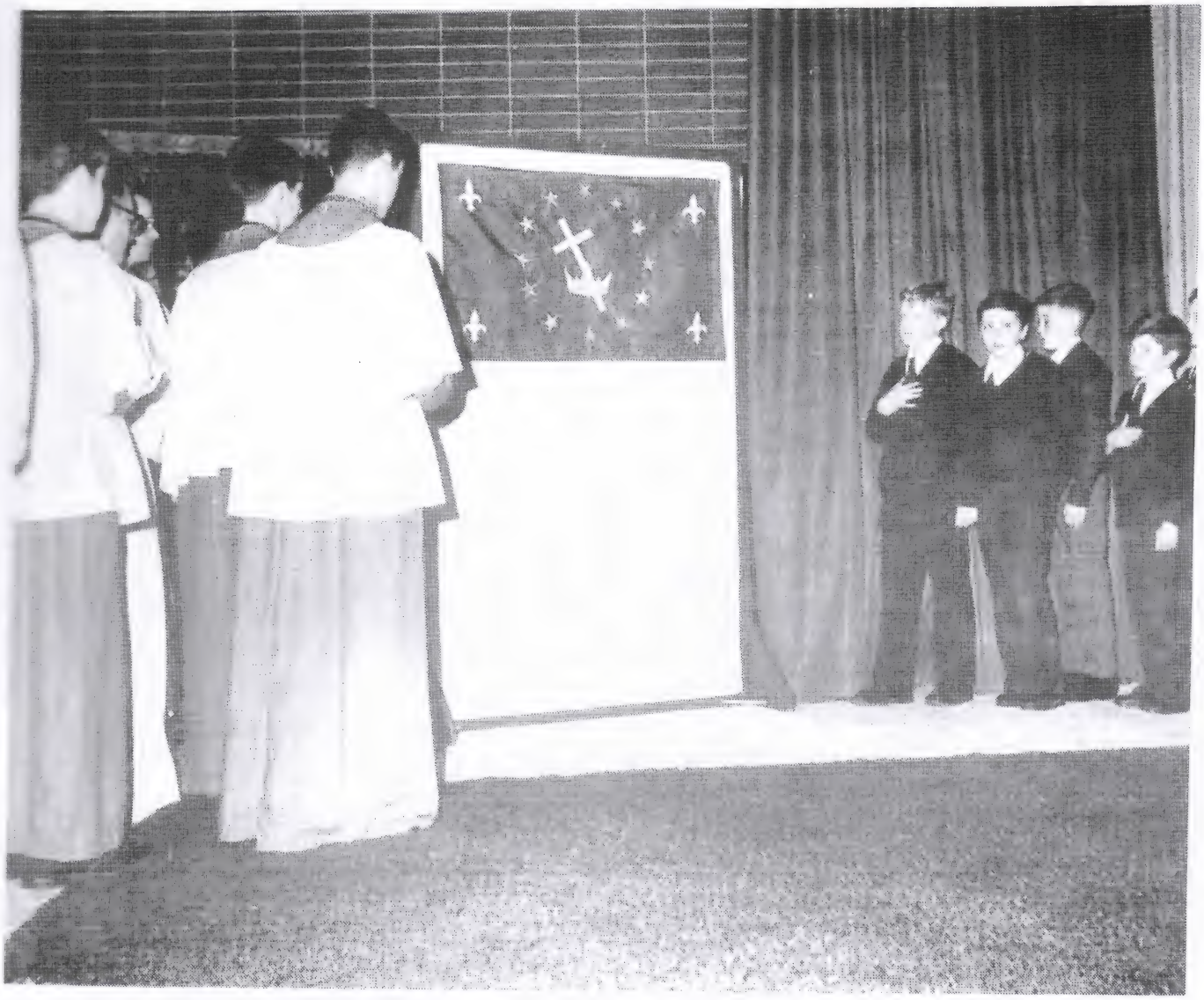
"I have never heard of this description concerning the flag," Johnsen said. "Only a very few Masons participated in the constitutional convention which passed a resolution to adopt a flag," he said.

According to the *World Book Encyclopedia,* the Continental Congress of 1782 declared the red to represent "heartiness or courage," the white "purity" and the blue "vigilance."

Some ex-members claim Schuckardt's anti-American teachings are a tactic to prevent members from swearing their allegiance to any group outside the TLRC.

In another disputed area, former members say Bishop Schuckardt preaches that America has never had a true Catholic bishop.

Bishop Schuckardt responded, saying there have been "only a very few true Catholic bishops in America."



Tridentine flag — **Religious clerics and students in the Tridentine Latin Rite Church salute and pledge allegiance to "Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception" flag during a church program held at Mount St. Michael. TLRC members created and designed the flag in honor of Mary, the patroness of America, Bishop Francis Schuckardt, TLRC founder and leader, said.**

Those bishops were Bishop (now saint) John Neumann (1811-1860), who served as prelate of Philadelphia, and the few bishops who endorsed the doctrine of papal infallibility defined at Vatican I (1869-70) for the first time, Schuckardt said.

All the other bishops in America, past and present, have repeatedly compromised or ignored papal decrees and have "succumbed to Freemasonic thought and pluralism," Schuckardt claims.

'Perversion of truth'

Father John Steiner, chancellor of the Spokane Diocese from 1977-80, said Schuckardt's views on American bishops compromising their faith is "an incredible perversion of the truth."

When Bishop Schuckardt was asked why Pope Pius XII or his predecessors (the only true popes in the TLRC's eyes) never warned American Catholics about the alleged heresies of their bishops, or at least sounded a clear alarm that the U.S. Government was supposedly anti-Catholic, the Tridentine leader replied that the popes have indeed issued such warnings.

Schuckardt cites Pope Pius XII's encyclical letter to the American hierarchy in 1939, Pope Leo XIII's treatise on the heresy of Americanism as well as his encyclical letter on true Christian government, as examples of warnings to America on the errors in the American church.

Schuckardt's interpretation of these papal writings, however, is not shared by Roman Catholic authorities.

Pope Pius XII and Pope Leo XIII refer to America not in a direct but a nuanced manner in these documents, Father Savelesky said. In these references, "The popes were not responding to positions officially held by the hierarchy but, rather, they were addressing potentially dangerous tendencies held by some Catholics both in America and Europe," he said.

Pope Leo XIII explicitly stated in his document concerning "Americanism" that he was not referring to "characteristic qualities which reflect honor on the American people," he said.

Nor did Pope Leo XIII single out any specific national hierarchy as holding the heretical doctrine, Father Savelesky said.

Bishop Schuckardt also believes the international society of Freemasonry was behind "the heresies of Vatican II."

Freemasons plotted to infiltrate the Catholic Church nearly

two centuries ago and finally succeeded in grabbing the reigns of the church at Vatican II, Bishop Schuckardt said in an interview.

The Freemasonic conspirators poisoned Pope Pius XII, the "last true Catholic vicar" in the TLRC's eyes, Bishop Schuckardt said.

Pope Pius XII died on Oct. 9, 1958 after suffering two strokes, according to official reports. He was 82 years old.

The TLRC's controversial interpretation of political and religious history includes the Jewish religion.

'The Zionist conspiracy'

TLRC officials, including Bishop Schuckardt, are hostile to Jews, ex-members say, adding that the leaders' anti-semitic views are disseminated to church members as religious education.

Bishop Schuckardt said these allegations from his ex-followers are misconstrued. He did, however, elaborate on his position concerning the Jewish race in an interview.

The Roman legions annihilated the Jewish race when the soldiers plundered and destroyed Jerusalem and the surrounding Jewish homeland in 70 A.D., Bishop Schuckardt contends. The only survivors of the massacre were a false sect of Jews, who embraced the Talmud as their holy book and subsequently became known as "Talmudic Jews," Schuckardt said.

The Talmud is a multi-volume work comprising the oral interpretation of Jewish law.

'Talmudic Judaism'

"Talmudic Judaism is a combination of Egyptian superstition, pagan rites and total blasphemy against Jesus and Mary," Bishop Schuckardt said in a 1974 tape-recorded talk to teenagers at a TLRC seminar. "The ideal of this sect is to destroy Christianity, Christian principles and Christian morals," he further states in the tape.

The Talmudic Jews changed their name to Zionists around the turn of this century, TLRC officials teach.

A large number of Zionists has infiltrated the College of Cardinals and been appointed to high positions in the Roman Catholic Church, according to TLRC literature. Goal of these secret Zionists is to corrupt and destroy the true Catholic faith by introducing false doctrines into the church, an ex-member said he was taught while in the TLRC.

Politically, Zionists have been planning for centuries to take over the world, claimed Schuckardt in the 1974 taped lecture. This view is also taught in TLRC high schools. He also claimed Zionists started the Bolshevik revolution in 1914 and the Second World War as part of their strategy to conquer the world and form it into a world Jewish state.

Zionists already control the financial and political structure of the majority of the world's countries, he added.

Not all Jews are Zionists, Bishop Schuckardt noted. "In the last 60 years, there has been a resurgence of Hebraic Judaism," he said, referring to ex-Zionists who have embraced the true Hebrew religion as taught in the Old Testament and have rejected Zionism.

When asked how many, or what percentage, of the 14 million Jews in the world today are Zionists or Hebraic Jews, Bishop Schuckardt answered, "I do not know."

Ex-members interviewed say Bishop Schuckardt and TLRC instructors use church documents and decrees to bolster their theories about the Jews and to show that Jews and Catholics are enemies.

The church's Fourth Council of Lateran in 1215, which decreed that Jews be excluded from public office and that they wear a badge, is one example of the past Jewish-Catholic enmity cited to members by TLRC officials, the ex-members said.

In recent times, and especially in this century. Roman Catholic pontiffs have deplored this unfair treatment of the Jews.

Pope Leo XIII, leader of the Catholic Church from 1878 to 1903, urged that offensive accusations towards Jews be avoided. He repudiated anti-semitism as opposed to the spirit of Christ.

'All Semites'

Pope Benedict (1914-22), Pope Pius XI (1922-39) and Pope Pius XII (1939-58) all denounced anti-semitism. Pope Pius XI said, "Anti-semitism is a movement in which we Chistians can have no part whatsoever . . . . Spiritually, we are all Semites."

Rabbi Eugene Gottesman

Rabbi Eugene Gottesman of Spokane's Temple Beth Shalom said the Tridentine leader's views on Judaism and the Talmud are "a complete distortion of the facts."

"This is the voice of anti-semitism speaking," the rabbi said.

The 14.2 million Jews in this world are "the direct descendants of Abraham, Issac and Jacob," Rabbi Gottesman said.

No blasphemy

The spiritual leader of over 300 Jewish families in the Inland Empire also challenged Schuckardt or "anyone to look through my 60 volumes of the Talmud and point out any blasphemy of the Christian religion.

"Jews would never blaspheme Christ or Mary because we consider them Jews," he said.

Rabbi Gottesman disagreed with the TLRC leader's opinion about Jewish history, saying "there is no such thing as Talmudic Jews," and "Jewish Zionism is entirely different than what Schuckardt maintains it is."

A World Zionist Movement was founded in 1894 by Theodore Herzel to work for re-establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, he explained.

World Zionism is now concerned only with the development of the state of Israel, Rabbi Gottesman said.

Assertions 'vicious'

"Neither the Jews nor the Zionists control the finances or politics of any country in the world except Israel," the rabbi said. He termed Schuckardt's assertion "vicious."

"Whoever makes these kinds of statements against the Jewish race is dressing himself in disgrace," Rabbi Gottesman said.

This worldwide Zionist conspiracy theory advanced by Bishop Schuckardt and taught in the TLRC's high schools, is not exclusive to the TLRC. Research indicates that the Jewish conspiracy theory, occasionally differing in some respects, is also held by many ultraconservative political groups and by extremist "right-wing Christian groups" in the United States.

Land development dispute

Chapter 4

The steeple bell of Mount St. Michael clangs from its fifth story perch, alerting Tridentine Latin Rite church members in nearby residences that a special feast day Mass is about to begin.

Men, women and children emerge from their homes and trailers surrounding their church's headquarters to walk the short distance to Mass.

Some of the children could pass their entire lives on this mountain top. The boys, if they decide to become a priest or brother in their church, would only have to walk the same path they are on now to enter their church's seminary.

The majority of the other boys and girls will probably grow up to marry each other. After inheriting a house from a parent or building their own house on church property, the husband and wife could walk this same path on their way to Mass with children of their own.

The land — a religious island to these people — could witness many generations being summoned to Mass by the steeple bell.

The idyllic scene above is the dream of many Tridentine members and — depending on how many homes are built around the Mount — the nightmare of their neighbors.

The neighbors contend that a high density of homes will cause irreparable damage to the environment surrounding the Mount.

The schismatic Catholic sect bought Mount St. Michael, a former Jesuit seminary, and 735 acres surrounding it from the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus for $1.5 million on Dec. 30, 1977.

If anyone would have suggested a few years back that Bishop Francis Schuckardt, TLRC leader, and his followers would be in a position to buy the Spokane landmark northeast of Hillyard, he would have been accused of dreaming.

But Schuckardt and his followers are an extremely zealous group, unyielding in their resistance to what they call "heretical" changes in the Roman Catholic Church brought by Vatican II and dedicated to expanding their church, which to them is the "only surviving remnant of the Roman Catholic faith."

With less than a dozen members, the sect started 12 years ago in a dilapidated two-story house in Coeur d'Alene. It is now an incorporated church body in both Washington and Idaho states with estimated property assets of $3 million. Schuckardt estimates the TLRC membership totals 5,000 followers, 800 of whom live in the Washington-Idaho area.

Now that the TLRC owns the Mount, individual church members have to date purchased over 300 acres of the Mount's land from their church either as a personal investment or a future home site.

It is conjectured by some that the Tridentines are in pursuit of yet another dream — a religious community encircling their church headquarters.

Proposal withdrawn

Officials at the Spokane County Planning Commission say that such a community, composing 156 homes, was proposed by the Tridentines in 1978. The proposal was later withdrawn by the TLRC in the face of stiff opposition to the development by a group of neighbors.

Residents of Morgan Acres and Orchard Prairie, areas adjacent to the Mount St. Michael property, have lobbied the SCPC claiming that more than the fate of a dream is at stake — it could be the fate of the whole area if too many houses are built on the hill.

The group of 175 residents incorporated under the name "North East Property Owners' Environmental Protection Association" (NEEPA) in January of 1979. Members say they feel a "large influx of families and homes into the Mount's property is ecologically unsafe." NEEPA has researched the impact of the proposed community on the Mount's environment to back up their position. Some of NEEPA's research is detailed later in this article.

A recent ruling by the SCPC seems to indicate that the carefully researched data presented to the commission may be persuading it to take a hard look at future development on the Mount property.

Last March 26, Thomas L. Davis, county zoning adjustor, denied a second request from Tridentine member Donald Ott asking for a zoning variance to build a house on property purchased from the TLRC.

Ott has hired a lawyer and has spent more than six months trying to secure a variance from the county.

Test case

Ott's request is looked upon as a test case that will set a precedent for any future development on the Mount's property.

Ott bought his property from the TLRC after the church put 430 of its 735 acres up for sale in the spring of 1979. Those acres were divided into 43 10-acre lots.

Under county law, it is legal to divide land into lots of more than 10 acres without county approval, said Steve Horobiowski, county short plat administrator.

Once those parcels are sold, the new owners may subdivide their land into two parcels of at least five acres, again without county approval.

As of February, 34 of the 10-acre lots have been purchased, said Thomas Drahman, administrator of the Mount St. Michael property. Of the buyers, 90 percent are church members, Drahman said.

Only six or seven of the purchased 10-acre lots are owned by single buyers, he continued. Church members have bought the remaining lots in joint-ownership pacts, ranging from two to six buyers per 10-acre lots, he said.

Joint-ownership

It is precisely the issue of joint-ownership lots on the Mount's property that caused zoning adjustor Davis to deny a zoning variance to Ott, Davis said at a county zoning hearing.

Ott bought his acreage with another buyer, Mrs. Helen Koza. When Ott proposed dividing the acreage and building a house on his land, a county requirement that building lots have 100 feet of frontage on a county road brought him before the zoning adjustor. Only Mrs. Koza's half of the acreage borders 100 feet of county road.

"The number of multiple ownerships in the area presents a strong eventuality" that others will file for variance in the near future, David said, adding that there is a "functional relationship" between Ott's lot and the land of other owners around them.

"Owners with similarly placed property in the area are going to expect the same type of treatment" if Ott is granted a variance, explained Doug Adams, as assistant to the zoning adjustor. "The zoning adjustor must closely scrutinize applications which represent a change in character from existing land use and patterns in any given area," Adams said. Ott's proposal represents a density change in the Mount St. Michael area, he explained.

Ott protests the county ruling, saying "the zoning adjustor is not basing his decision on facts at hand. He is making assumptions on what might happen in the worst possible analysis."

Drahman estimates that only 30 houses will be built on the site by 1985. He acknowledges, however, that the property owners hold the final decision on whether and when they will build.

Ott has since filed suit against the county and NEEPA in Superior Court asking for a judicial review of his case. The trial is still pending.

Ott's lawsuit, however, and his battle with the county planning commission may soon intensify, according to information obtained by the *Inland Register* this week.

County records show that Ott has filed a notice of a real estate contract transferring his five acres of land to a neighbor, Miss Grace Jedlicka, who owns approximately 10 acres of land bordering Ott's property, said Richard George, a deputy prosecuting attorney for Spokane County.

Miss Jedlicka has recently acquired a building permit for a house which will be located on land formerly owned by Ott, George said, noting that Miss Jedlicka's land has the required road frontage.

"The real estate contract itself has not been filed yet, but Miss Jedlicka has an interest in Ott's property and has obtained a building permit," George said.

When asked to confirm the alleged land transfer, Ott referred all questions to his attorney, Stanley Schultz.

Lawsuit planned

When reached for comment Tuesday, Schultz said he and Ott are "actively pursuing" a plan to file a lawsuit in federal court against the SCPC. The lawsuit will ask for unspecified damages resulting from "discriminatory treatment of Ott by the zoning adjustor" and other county staff members, Schultz said.

Confirming that Ott has transferred all his property to Miss Jedlicka, Schultz alleges that the zoning adjustor and staff members of the board of adjustment (the county's appeals board for decisions rendered by the zoning adjustor) repeatedly denied Ott his variance request because of "religious prejudice."

For example, SCPC personnel asked Ott "several times during public hearings on his variance request whether he was a member of the TLRC," Schultz said, claiming the question is a violation of Ott's human rights because "it has absolutely no bearing" on his client's request.

The SCPC is hindering Ott's right to build a house because of his religion, Schultz claims.

Expenses incurred

Ott has incurred "heavy expenses" in his fight to gain a variance from the county, including being forced to buy a house in a different section of Spokane because he could not build his home near Mount St. Michael, Schultz added.

"The final decision to file suit in federal court still rests with Mr. Ott," Schultz said, adding that both he and Ott feel they have "a very strong case against the county.

Even if a lawsuit is filed, NEEPA representatives are openly skeptical about the land transfer between Ott and Miss Jedlicka. "There is a possibility that Miss Jedlicka may deed Ott's land back to him after a home is built on the property he once owned," Mrs. Leon Gaston, NEEPA president, said.

Schultz dismisses the allegation as "sheer speculation" but Mrs. Gaston counters that contradictory public testimony by Miss Jedlicka has made NEEPA suspicious about the land transfer.

At a March 5 (1980) zoning adjustor's hearing on Ott's case, Miss Jedlicka stated that she was not planning to build on her 10 acres because she wanted to join the TLRC convent in the near future, Mrs. Gaston said, questioning why the TLRC member changed her mind.

Mrs. Gaston said she believes that Miss Jedlicka is attempting to circumvent the law by helping Ott build his house on his former property.

The NEEPA spokesman cited another reason for its concern about a possible large-scale development of homes around Mount St. Michaels.

A large majority of TLRC members are lobbying the county to change its proposed classification of the Mount area from rural (which only permits the construction of one house per 10 acres) to semi-rural (which permits one house per two to 10 acres), Mrs. Gaston said.

Sign to NEEPA

The TLRC landowners' interest in the semi-rural classification is a sign to NEEPA that large-scale development may be in the offing, Mrs. Gaston said.

Ott denied this charge, saying he supports the semi-rural classification because it is similar to the density currently allowed in the area, which is one house per five acres (as long as county requirements are met).

Spokane County is currently reviewing all its land, excluding incorporated cities, to update its density standards. The county has proposed that the Mount St. Michael region be classified "rural." A final decision on the classification, however, will be made later this summer after evaluating comments from concerned citizens, said Gary Fergen, county long-range planning administrator.

History of controversy

The controversy surrounding the Mount St. Michael's property began two years ago.

In 1978, the Tridentines asked the SCPC for permission to build 156 homes on the Mount property for their church community. To have been christened "St. Joseph Village," the development would have included homes primarily along Palmer Road and Orchard Road.

Upon receiving the proposal, the SCPC requested the Tridentines to submit an Environmental Impact Statement before giving the church a "go-ahead" for its project.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a detailed report on the effect a major change will have on critical areas of the environment (water, air, road usage, etc.).

Once drafted by potential developers, the EIS is forwarded to the SCPC and to approximately 40 federal, state and county agencies who review the statement. It is then given to the Hearing Examiners Board, which uses the EIS as a tool in deciding whether the development is feasible and safe, according to Pat Harper, a former coordinator for the SCPC.

$5,500 per acre

Although the Tridentines hired one of their own members from out of state to draft the report, the EIS was never submitted to the county. Instead, the TLRC divided its acreage into 43 10-acre lots and placed the lots on the open market for an average asking price of $5,500 per acre.

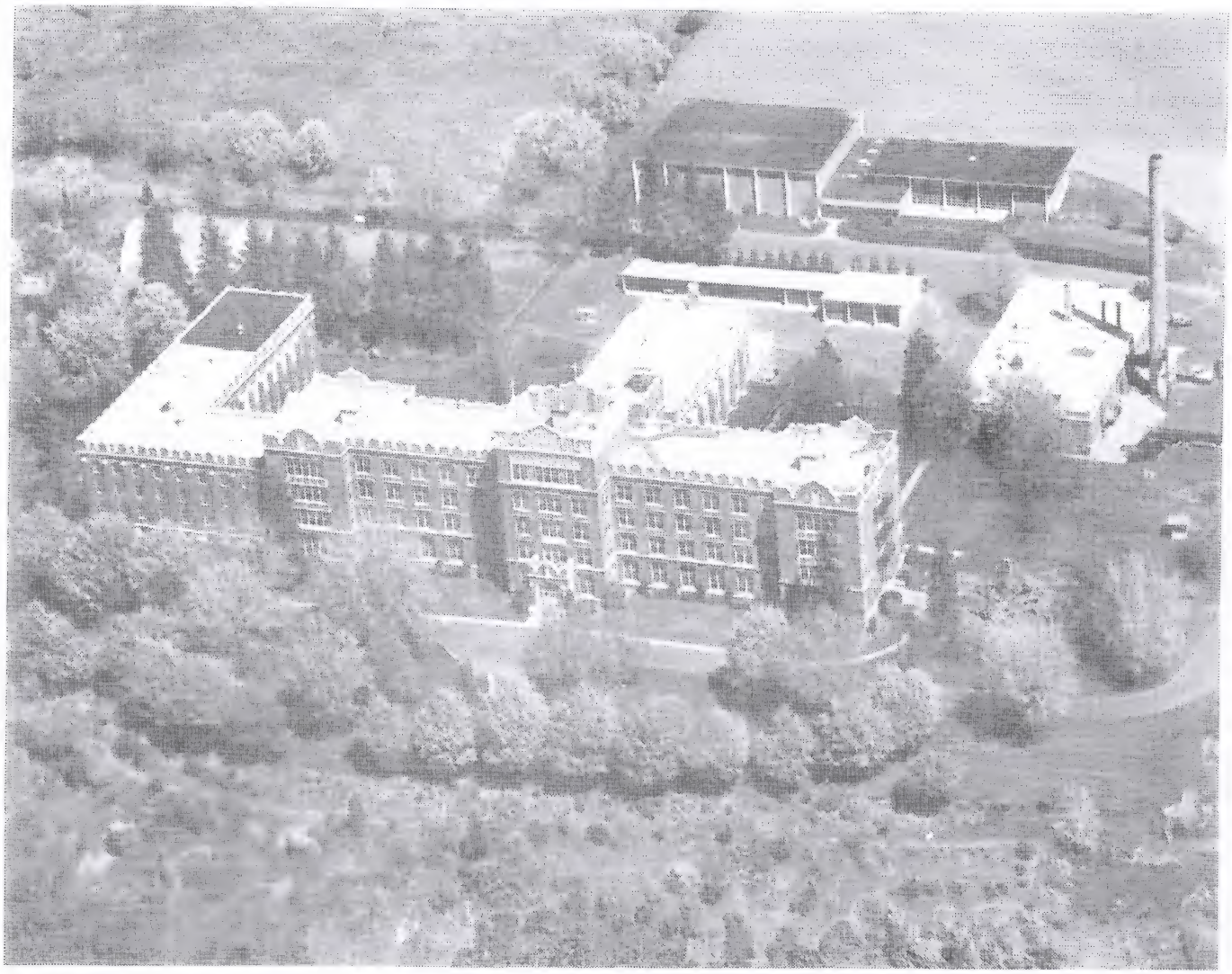
An EIS is not required for the 10-acre lots, according to county regulations.

"The original proposal would not work because of the county problems, the expense we would have to bear and because of the neighbors' concern that the population density would be too high," Drahman said.

"The church's board of directors also came to the conclusion that we should get out of the development of property and renew our original purpose for purchasing the Mount — which is the development of the seminary," Drahman added.

To date, no fewer than 10 dwellings have been erected on the Mount's property by the Tridentines, including a large house that could possibly serve as a rectory for the bishop, Drahman said.

Arguing that an EIS would have completely resolved any developmental or construction questions in their area, NEEPA members say they are disappointed an EIS was never completed by the Tridentines.



Mount Saint Michael — **Founded as St. Michaels Mission by Father Joseph Cataldo in 1866, Mount St. Michael has undergone several changes in its over 100 years of history. The Mount's main administration building (in foreground) was constructed in 1916. The Tridentine Latin Rite Church purchased the Mount from the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus in December 1977. TLRC members are currently involved in a controversy with neighbors concerning an alleged large-scale housing development project on land purchased by the TLRC. (NC Photo)**

"It appears the Tridentines may be attempting an 'end run' around the county regulations in order to build the original amount of homes — or close to the original number of homes — that they proposed in 1978," Mrs. Gaston said.

"I am convinced that if an EIS would have been made, it would have definitely been against any large-scale development," she added.

Among other things, NEEPA contends that an EIS statement was needed to answer questions about whether the increased population (roughly estimated to them by Drahman at 2,000) would eventually lead to:

- depletion of water in the surface springs near Palmer Road;
- pollution of the Hillyard trough of the Spokane Aquifer because of the new septic tanks and sewage works;
- widening and resurfacing of Lincoln Road to accommodate increased traffic flow — an act which will bring that road to the "front doors of many residences," making the homes virtually unlivable.

"The high price of the land — $5,500 an acre — signals to our group that the church wants to keep outsiders from purchasing the land in order to finance the lots to members," Mrs. Gaston said.

Designated acreage

The NEEPA president pointed out that the Jesuits, the Mount's original owners, are selling specified acreage to the Tridentines for only $1,700 an acre. In their mortgage contract with the Tridentines, the Jesuits agreed to release designated acreage to the TLRC as long as the traditionalist sect meet their annual mortgage payments.

Only 45 acres have been released to the TLRC as of the beginning of this year, Drahman said. The acres are situated "all over the Mount's 735 acres," he said.

Summarizing NEEPA's position concerning the Mount St. Michael property, Mrs. Gaston said the neighborhood environment group feels "the Tridentines are taking advantage of a loophole in the Spokane County law to build as many houses as they want through join-ownership pacts and the possible subdivision of land by single owners."

Drahman condensed his church's position in the controversy by saying, "The TLRC is only concerned with the development of religious buildings and schools on the 260 acres owned specifically by the church. The TLRC is not interested in any large-scale development of homes in the area."

Church Program — **An unidentified member dressed in a brown Franciscan habit kisses the ring of Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt, leader of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church, during a break in a church program held at Mount St. Michael in Spokane. The TLRC member portrayed a monk in the program. (The Franciscan habit is not the regular attire for TLRC clerics or members.) On Bishop Schuckardt's left is Frater Denis Chicoine, TLRC vicar general.**

Other buildings proposed

Besides residential dwellings, the TLRC is also planning to construct other buildings on the Mount's property, according to Drahman.

A girls school, convent, cathedral, fire station and a retirement home will hopefully be erected at the Mount in the near future, Drahman said.

In addition, land is being set aside for a cemetery and for raising livestock, Frater Louis Marie, a TLRC deacon, said. Church members are also planting an orchard.

TLRC seminary

The Tridentine seminary and both the boys grade and high schools are currently housed in the main administration building.

Minimum annual payment of the Tridentines to the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus is $121,000. "If we make only the minimum payment each year, the mortgage will run 17 to 18 years," Drahman said.

The Tridentines have made their June 1 payment of last year, said Father John Kelley SJ, secretary of the Oregon Province.

The Mount was purchased by the Pillar Investment Company, which was acting on behalf of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church, on Dec. 30, 1977.

Down payment was $250,000 "and that money came from church members — starting from zero," said Drahman.

According to the mortgage, the property is being purchased by Drahman; Mrs. Mary M. Drahman, his wife, and Larry P. Urann, a church member and employee of Spokane Associated Brokers in the Spokane Valley.

Church members, who contributed to the purchase of the Mount from the Jesuits, were not buying property for themselves but rather the church, Drahman emphasized.

"Our first dedication is to the church," Drahman said. "We all felt that it was necessary for the church to grow. We outgrew everything else so we all got behind the church and invested our money."

"One member did say, 'I will give you $20,000 for the purchase of the Mount in hopes that I can have property on the land someday,' but we weren't committed to do anything but buy property," Drahman said.

Excluded from the purchase is the Mount St. Michael cemetery and three acres encompassing the burial ground. The Jesuits are still taking care of this property.

Members follow 'Christ crucified'

Chapter 5

You notice them sometimes in downtown Spokane: the women wearing long flowing dresses resembling Religious habits of 30 years ago; the men usually dressed in dark colors with closely cropped hair.

A thin silver chain bearing a miraculous medal or a rosary is often worn around their necks. A scapular is also pinned on their clothing.

These are the members of what Spokane has come to know as the Tridentine Latin Rite Church, a traditionalist sect claiming to be the only true Roman Catholic Church on earth.

Headquartered at Mount St. Michael, the former Jesuit seminary on Spokane's north side, church members practice self-denial and live a life of prayer, penitence and sacrifice. They attempt to pattern their lives after the austere dictates given by the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima, LaSallete and at other apparition sites.

"We want to mirror the life of Our Lord and strip ourselves from the attachment to this world and sin," said Frater Louis Marie, a deacon in the church. "In order to do this, we have to carry the cross and conform our lives to the cross."

The TLRC calls this way of life, following "Jesus Crucified." Some examples:

• Member Tom Drahman took an indefinite leave of absence from a high-paying position with American Sign and Indicator Co. to act as administrator of the Mount St. Michael property. "I will stay here as long as the bishop wants me to," Drahman remarked to the *Inland Register*, as if he were talking about minutes rather than months, or possibly years. His bishop is Francis K. Schuckardt, 42-year-old leader of the church.

Children board at school

• Approximately 60 parents in the TLRC living outside the state board their sons at Mount St. Michael and their daughters in Coeur d'Alene, where another church school is located, for the nine-month school year. This separation is broken only by summer vacation, two weeks at Christmas and one week at Easter.

• Religious brothers and sisters live a strict, almost cloistered life. They are never permitted alone with the opposite sex. Nor do they travel anywhere without a companion, unless it is an emergency. Both Brothers and Sisters are under total obedience to their superiors.

For church members, following "Jesus Crucified" also means having their reading restricted to material approved by church hierarchy; wearing a rosary around their neck and the scapular in public; and keeping holy hours at their chapel during the middle of the night.

TLRC women wear long dresses and scarves to practice modesty, imitate the Blessed Virgin Mary and to make reparation "for the immoral fashions worn by many women in the world today," members say.

It is not uncommon for the members to prostrate themselves or kneel with their foreheads pressed against the floor during Mass. When they recite the Rosary in church, many will stretch out their arms and hold them in a crucifix position until all the decades are prayed.

Two books by St. Louis de Montfort, *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary* and *Friends of the Cross*, play a key role in the church as members attempt to follow St. Louis' criteria for being a "slave of Mary and Jesus," outlined in the books.

The Tridentines come from all walks of life. Some of them are engineers, chemists, dentists, nurses, doctors, heavy equipment operators, stockbrokers and chefs. Their ranks also include a former policeman, a retired FBI agent, an Olympic bronze medalist and a former television talk show hostess.

Statue of St. Louis Mary de Montfort, St. Peter's, Rome.

A short biographical profile of Carl South and his family's 11 years in the TLRC is common to the experiences of other lay families in the sect.

South, 45, and his wife Kathleen are the parents of six children. Their oldest son is a seminarian and their oldest daughter has joined the convent. Another son was married a year ago to a daughter of another church family, they said. Three children still live at home.

As a family, the five of them recite the rosary once a day and spend time each night in spiritual reading.

No TV allowed

The Souths refuse to have a television set in their home because of their religious convictions. "Television promotes immodesty, immorality and violence," South said, adding that the programs also "tear down authority figures in the minds of children and adolescents."

The Souths do not subscribe to any secular newspapers or magazines because they believe the publications are "vehicles" used by Satan to turn people away from God and towards sin.

Stories in secular newspapers are also biased, South said, claiming the "godless and liberal views of reporters influence their writing.

The TLRC's official position is to "strongly discourage" members from subscribing to secular newspapers and magazines, owning televisions and attending movies because they are often "an occasion of sin for members," Bishop Schuckardt said. Nearly all TLRC members accept these prohibitions without compromise.

Censorship challenged

Former members have challenged this practice of censorship in the TLRC. Censorship, as used in the TLRC, is a device for Bishop Schuckardt to control and "brainwash" his followers.

and to prevent them from discovering inconsistent practices in the sect, the ex-members say.

Bishop Schuckardt counters that censorship is an essential element for nurturing a strong spiritual life in his members.

Most of the members are not natives of Washington or Idaho; the majority appear to have moved here from California.

Members are dedicated to their ailing bishop, who suffers from phlebitis and a migraine condition. It is easily apparent that Schuckardt, whether sick or well, is the hub of almost every religious function in the TLRC.

It is a sore point with the members to have their bishop criticized or his motives questioned in the press or by outsiders. When they hear or encounter such challenges, they ascribe it to "more persecution of the TLRC" and the fulfillment of Jesus' words: "The world will hate you because you are mine," said one Religious Brother.

Followers kept waiting

Bishop Schuckardt's ill-health will at times keep his followers waiting hours for the start of Mass or other special church celebrations where he is the main celebrant. Members normally fill the waiting period by reciting litanies, the rosary or other special prayers in the chapel.

As the head of the TLRC, Schuckardt has set down rules on the distribution of the sacraments to his followers — regulations which have never been Roman Catholic Church policy.

For example, any TLRC member who smokes is automatically barred from the sacraments. Bishop Schuckardt explains the rationale behind this practice: "Smoking is a sin against the fifth commandment because medical research has shown that it is a form of slow suicide. As bishop of this church, I have to apply the moral teaching of the church to any and all circumstances that arise in the church. I will absolutely withhold the sacraments to any one who endangers his life by smoking."

The sacraments are also withheld from any male member who is not "properly groomed." Long hair and long sideburns will disqualify the member from receiving Communion because long hair was once a "symbol of Marxist, hippie and the communist revolution — all anti-Christ movements," Bishop Schuckardt said.

Members of the TLRC accept these rules and also insist that Schuckardt be given the dignity and respect of his episcopal office. The TLRC's financial board voted early in 1979 to purchase a $165,000 house as a priory for their shepherd on Spokane's south side.

"I opposed that decision," Schuckardt said in an interview.

As bishop, he has the power to overrule any decision made by any TLRC board, but he chose not to veto this decision, because the multi-room priory also serves as "chancery offices" for the TLRC, he said.

Schuckardt's priory is criticized by TLRC ex-members, who say that Schuckardt lives "high off the hog" while his followers are constantly pressured to sacrifice their financial and material wealth for the sake of God and his church.

Arguments countered

He counters these arguments, saying: "Popes, bishops and rich kings have become great saints while living amidst great material wealth because they were not attached to those things. I have a spirit of poverty. I feel that I am detached from material goods. I couldn't care less if I lived in a little shack."

A dress code is enforced for members who attend Mass and other church functions because "no person should be allowed to receive the Holy Eucharist who is dressed as a slob," Bishop Schuckardt said.

The dress code includes full-length dresses and veils which completely cover the hair for female members. Men are required to wear long-sleeved shirts and slacks, preferably with a tie.

Segregation of the sexes is practiced at TLRC functions, with men sitting on one side of the room and women on the other.

TLRC members are quick to insist they have not left the Roman Catholic faith, nor have they joined a new church or a "church in schism." Rather, they say, Rome has left the true Catholic faith. After Vatican II, they remained just as they always were in regard to their faith. They call themselves the "remnant church" and the "Catholic Church in the catacombs." They spare no expense to restore and build their church.

The buildings at their City of Mary in Rathdrum, former TLRC headquarters, as well as the renovations at Mount St. Michael in Spokane were done by members who spent long hours laboring for their "mother church."

Spread of apathy feared

When asked what he feels is the greatest threat to the religious community he founded in 1968, the 42-year-old prelate responded, "the spread of apathy" in his members, though he calls them "very sacrificial."

Judging from the amount of time they spend at church activities, members have not succumbed to apathy. Indeed, the entire lifestyle of the Tridentines appears to revolve around their prayers, religious exercises and spiritual discipline.

Strict discipline and corporal punishment are practiced at homes and in the schools. This practice of "not sparing the rod" has led to allegations of child abuse in the church, specifically in the schools. Members interviewed by the *Inland Register* deny these charges.

"My children were never harmed or molested while they were in school," said Mrs. Jonas Puskorious, a mother of three who has been a church member more than 10 years. "On the contrary, I feel that the children in our church are an asset to society because of their behavior, consideration of others and their dedication to family life — all of which they learned in school."

Discipline practiced

Another mother of three, Mrs. Al Fuire, agreed and said she does not feel that the discipline in the schools is "too harsh or too much for the children." She said she practiced the same forms of discipline (for example, having the child kneel for 30 minutes or more as a form of punishment) in her own home when her children were smaller and had misbehaved.

The TLRC has been criticized for splitting familes apart in the name of religion. Members refute these allegations.

"People are only too willing to look at the natural and forget the supernatural," said one sister. "Our stand is attacked so often because we place the supernatural (our union with Christ) first over a natural union (a family unit). Our Lord did say that the sword of division would come to set father against son, mother against daughter, but this is not the goal, by any stretch of the imagination, of our church," she continued.

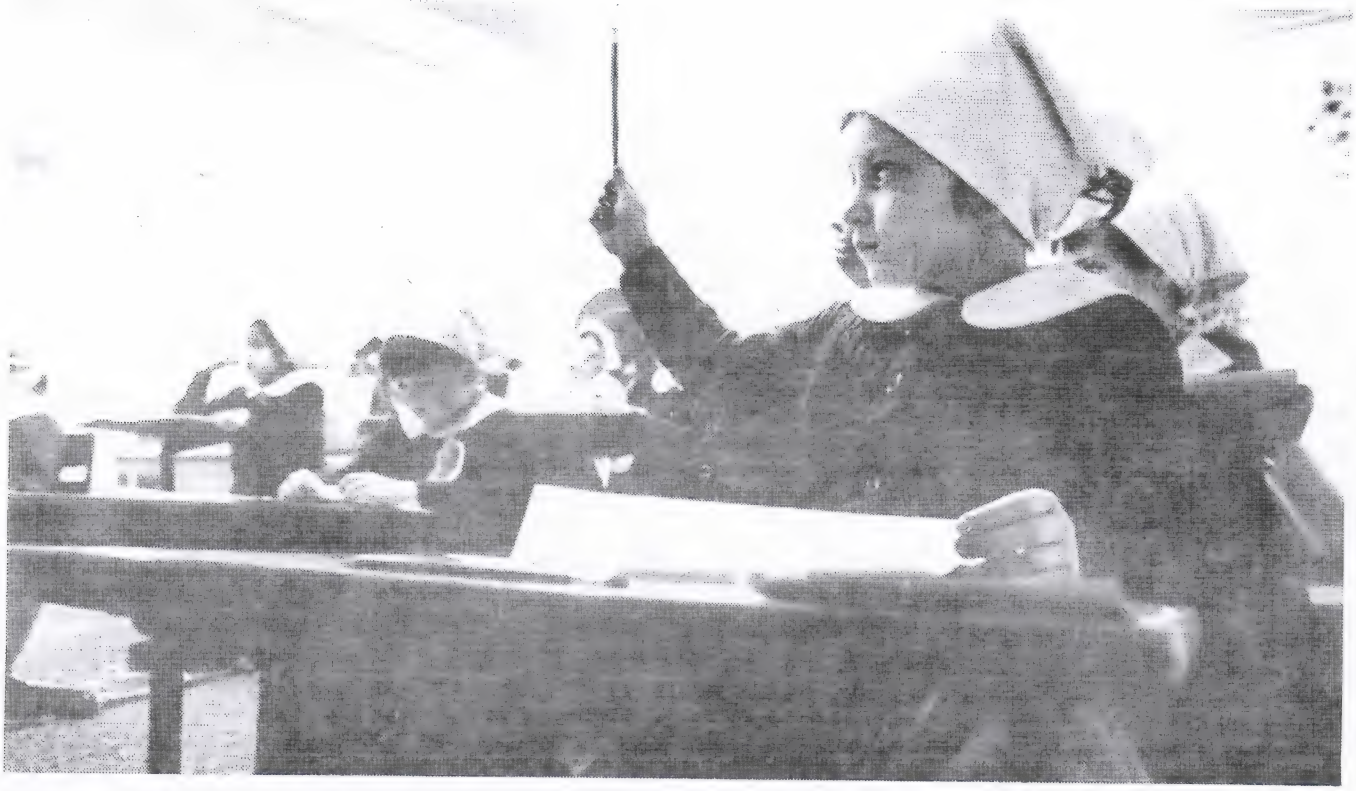
"It is a natural outcome when you have some members accepting the church of Christ and others rejecting it. The Lord left us those words so we would have something to fall back on."

Families in conflict

Past Catholic Church history shows many examples of families in conflict with their offspring because one member wanted to live a life of total commitment to the church, said TLRC layman South. "St. Francis of Assisi, St. John Vianney and other saints were literally kidnapped by their parents and incarcerated, because they strongly believed in their religion," he said.

Still, Scripture and lives of saints cannot ease the pain of being separated from loved ones and remembering the days of family harmony.

"It tears me apart," Brian Cox, a father of three, said about



TLRC Grade School — **A young student at St. Philomena Grade School, located at the City of Mary in Rathdrum, Idaho, raises her hand to answer a question. Over 200 students attend four schools operated by the Tridentine Latin Rite Church. The two grade schools and two high schools are segregated by sexes and are known collectively as the St. Maria Regina Academy. Members feel that God's truth is only taught in the TLRC and its schools.**

being separated from a mother and two brothers who turned against the church.

Another member, Sister Mary Katherine explains the separation from her parents, brothers and sisters in this manner: "I have given my whole life to do God's will. Of course it hurts to be away from my family but that is part of the sacrifice of my life to God."

There is a conscious separation of the Tridentines from the rest of society, they admit. The need for such division is because "no man can serve two masters," Bishop Schuckardt said, quoting the words of Christ.

"A person of the world cannot possibly understand the teaching of Jesus Crucified and the true Church unless he opens his heart and seeks the truth," he said.

The isolation is also prompted by a sense of self-preservation on the part of members who do not want to expose themselves to the temptation to sins they say is rampant in secular society.

The following short excerpt from a tape-recorded talk by Bishop Schuckardt in 1972 illustrates why the TLRC appears to be a "closed community" to some:

"This is one of very few true Catholic communities left on the face of the earth, so all the legions of hell are naturally going to concentrate on destroying this community," Bishop Schuckardt states.

"And we must be careful that the devil never catches us in a moment of weakness, a moment of doubt, a moment of contradiction or sorrow, or that we are feeling sorry for ourselves."

Membership growing

The TLRC's isolation appears to attract as many members to the community as it deters. New members are added to the membership rolls each year while only a very small number of members leave.

"We have our growing pains but we are reaching a fantastic amount of people throughout the United States," said Father Clement Kubish, a 79-year-old priest who joined Bishop Schuckardt and his community in 1971.

Father Clement is the only priest in the TLRC who has not been ordained by Schuckardt. (There are seven priests in the TLRC.) He was ordained by Bishop Daniel Sheehan, the Roman Catholic leader of the Archdiocese of Omaha, Neb.

The priest was relieved of his parish assignment in that diocese and "forced into early retirement" because he refused to say the English Mass following Vatican II, he said.

Father Clement, who now lives in semi-retirement in Coeur d'Alene, sheds light on the apparent steady growth of the TLRC:

"We used to travel all the time when I first joined this movement," he said, "usually by car and plane. When we reached a town, it would not be uncommon for me to spend 14-17 hours a day hearing confessions and counseling our church members and other interested parties. The strain was terrific and almost impossible to bear at times but we did it — and I was already 70 years of age. Finally, the toll of these trips began to ruin my health. I requested the bishop to relieve me and he did."

Missionary tours

The missionary tours and lectures across the nation are still continued by the bishop and six TLRC priests who venture out at least four times a year, if not more. They stop at the chapels the TLRC has founded in Los Angeles, Phoenix and other cities and also schedule lectures in other towns.

"Sometimes at our lectures, a member of the audience will

TLRC Children — **Even the very young wear long dresses and scarves to practice modesty and imitate the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Tridentine Latin Rite Church. The two unidentified girls pictured above are waiting for the start of a Mass at Mount St. Michael.**

tell me that I'm crazy," said Father Denis Chicoine, TLRC vicar general. "I always reply that I may be crazy but tell me where my doctrine is wrong. Nobody ever points out errors.

"I simply tell them that they should pray the rosary, wear the scapular and study the church because our heavenly Mother will guide them to the truth," he said.

Attendance at these lectures can vary "from a packed house of 500 to only a handful," said one Religious Brother, who accompanied Frater Chicoine on a national mission tour.

When a sufficient number of people indicate interest or acceptance of the TLRC creed in one of these missionary towns, church leaders establish weekly "cell group" meetings where the converts meet to recite the Rosary, study Scripture and church encyclicals and attempt to develop a personal program of daily prayer and spiritual reading.

Since the TLRC members do not believe in partaking of the sacraments of any of the other traditionalist and Latin churches in the country, it is not a rare occurrence for some of them to move to Coeur d'Alene and Spokane so that they might be near the sacraments and enroll their children in the church school.

The TLRC operates its own school system under the title of the Maria Regina Academy which is headquartered in Coeur d'Alene. The academy oversees four schools: St. Philomena grade school for girls, Immaculata Convent high school for girls, St. Louis de Montfort grade school for boys and Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament high school for boys. The girls schools are located at Coeur d'Alene and the TLRC's City of Mary in Rathdrum; the boys schools are at Mount St. Michael in Spokane.

The two Mount St. Michael schools are not in compliance with Washington State's standards for private schools nor are the schools' instructors certified by the state, said school officials in Olympia, Wash.

Currently, the TLRC's two Religious orders number 82 sisters and 52 brothers. Approximately 200 students attend the grade and high schools in the TLRC, a brother said.

Frater Chicoine acknowledges that the TLRC's rift with Rome, by its very nature, involves eternal consequences for its members. "If we are wrong, then we have forsaken God," Frater Chicoine admits. But then he swiftly adds: "I can't prove to myself that we are wrong."

TLRC members echo the sentiments of their vicar general. They are willing to risk their lives, souls and eternity on the conviction that the TLRC is God's last refuge for Roman Catholics.

Ex-members say sect a 'cult'

Chapter 6

(Editor's note: At their request, fictitious names are used for certain ex-members in this article. Sources report that in the past, they have received obscene or threatening phone calls and have had their property vandalized when they cooperated with media reporting on their former church.)

The leader of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church, Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt, has called them "a fanatical group of men and women who have banded together to spread lies, slander and attacks" on his church.

"They have accused us of everything imaginable, including satan-worshipping and murder," protests Schuckardt, who founded the TLRC, a Catholic sect in rebellion against Vatican II changes, in 1968.

These men and women, ex-members and former associates of the TLRC, will first disavow any connection with spreading rumors of murder and the like against the TLRC. Secondly, they say they are innocent of spreading any lies about their former church. They are simply stating their opinion about what they saw and experienced while members of the TLRC, they claim.

Deceived by leaders

These ex-members say TLRC followers are being consciously deceived by their leaders who have "systematically cut them off from the rest of society" and have programmed them to follow the commands of their religious superiors or risk "losing their immortal souls."

In addition, TLRC leaders have bred so much personal fear into their followers that many members are hesitant to make their own decision on church, political and domestic matters, they claim.

Bishop Schuckardt has conditioned his followers to view the world outside their community as inherently evil, the ex-members say. He has invented conspiracy stories, claiming that civil and religious groups, such as the Roman Catholic Church and the U.S. government, are secretly plotting to destroy their community. These conspiratorial groups are acting under the auspices of Satan, members are told.

TLRC a 'cult'

In other words, the ex-members say, the TLRC is a cult.

"A cult is led by a dictatorial, often charismatic leader. It consists of members who abdicate their right to say 'no.' It teaches that the end justifies the means . . . . It has unlimited funds. And it instills fear, hatred and suspicion in its members," said Rabbi Maurice Davis, a nationally known expert on cults, during testimony at a U.S. Senate informational hearing on the growth of religious cults in America held last year.

Former TLRC members charge Schuckardt with using the traditional Roman Catholic Church as "a cloak of deception to draw good, decent Catholics" into the TLRC.

To substantiate their allegation that the TLRC can be termed a cult, two ex-members cited the research of Dr. Marvin Galper, a San Diego clinical psychologist.

A specialist on cults and their methods of indoctrination, Dr. Galper presented a talk on his cult research to religious leaders in Los Angeles about two years ago. His talk was reported in the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner.*

Parallels drawn

Citing Dr. Galper's statements concerning the basic characteristics of a cult, ex-members drew parallels to what they saw and experienced in the TLRC. Some of these parallels follow.

One characteristic of a cult is that "it trains its members to see their own families as an instrument of the devil and, as a result, many cut off family ties," according to Dr. Galper.

"The majority of families in the TLRC has severed ties with at least one child or close family member because that person has refused to accept the TLRC as an infallible church," said Mike Kerfoot, who quit the sect in 1975 leaving behind his parents, two brothers and a sister who are still in the church.

TLRC officials teach that members who quit the TLRC have been taken over by the devil, Kerfoot said, explaining why families are reluctant to contact their estranged kin, especially those who have publicly denounced the TLRC leadership and practices.

Kerfoot gave a personal example of this alleged TLRC practice.

Confidential bulletin

A confidential information bulletin was sent out to all TLRC members after Kerfoot and another family quit the TLRC, he said. The bulletin warned church members not to "fall victims to the insidious lies of this brood of vipers — sons of their father, the prince of lies."

"My parents consider me doomed to hell because I have left the TLRC and have challenged the authority and legitimacy of Schuckardt as a Roman Catholic bishop," Kerfoot said.

His parents have never come to visit after he and his wife left the TLRC, even though they live less than five miles away, he added. The birth of their first child two years ago and a second child this year has brought no home visit from his parents, he said.

"The only time we see Mike's parents is when we pack up and go over to their house," Mrs. Kerfoot said, adding that she feels the closeness of the two familes has been destroyed because of the TLRC's policy about ex-members.

Along with Kerfoot, other ex-members have also been called "disciples of Satan" by Bishop Schuckardt.

In an interview, Schuckardt said he has called ex-members "disciples of the devil." "The ex-members are doing the work of the devil by attacking the true church, so I have not hesitated to call them that," he said.

Marriages broken

The ex-members level another complaint against Schuckardt, saying the TLRC's extreme religious views have broken up marriages.

"In the TLRC, any spouse who refuses simply to attend and recognize the TLRC as the only true church — without actively discouraging his married partner or children from doing so — is considered a heretic by the TLRC leaders," said Mrs. Jean Case, a member from 1971 to 1976.

TLRC officials pressure the loyal spouse to choose either the TLRC or "this marriage to an infidel," she said.

In most cases, the husband is disenchanted with the TLRC and his wife is loyal, Mrs. Case said. "I know of several spouses in the TLRC who are going through the motions of being a faithful member because they know that their wives will leave them and take the kids with her, if he ever calls for a showdown on 'either me or this church,' " Mrs. Case said.

Responding, Bishop Schuckardt said some marriage separations in the TLRC stem from "one spouse being a traditionalist Catholic while the other is not. Others had marital difficulties before they entered the TLRC," he said.

A second characteristic of a cult, according to Dr. Galper, is that "it indoctrinates its members into not thinking, into allowing the group to do his thinking for him."

Accepting Bishop Schuckardt as their religious superior, TLRC members continually subject their reasoning powers to

TLRC a cult? — **Once numbered among the Tridentine Latin Rite Church's members, pictured above, several ex-members have charged that the TLRC is a "destructive cult." Members are "programmed" to follow the commands of TLRC leader and founder, Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt, or else "risk losing their souls," the former members allege. The controversial bishop uses the traditional Roman Catholic Church as "a cloak of deception to draw good, decent Catholics into the TLRC," they say.**

Bishop Schuckardt, all the ex-members interviewed by the *Inland Register* said. They listed several examples:

• In 1975, members allowed the TLRC leaders to confiscate all their secular and religious books at the request of Bishop Schuckardt, Mrs. Case said. "The only books allowed in the members' homes — then and now — are those explicitly sanctioned by Schuckardt," adds Kerfoot.

Bishop Schuckardt responded: "As a bishop I am given the responsibility by past decrees of the Vatican to protect the faith and morals of my people. The books were confiscated because many members were troubled about the heresies contained in some of their books. They requested that we go through their books."

Ex-members claim Schuckardt was behind the book confiscation because he wants to keep his members ignorant about true Catholic teachings.

The TLRC also discourages members from subscribing to secular newspapers, owning televisions, attending movies or associating with other traditionalist Catholic groups, the ex-members point out. These forms of censorship are tools used by Bishop Schuckardt to control and "brainwash" his followers and to prevent them from discovering inconsistent practices in the sect, the ex-members said.

• In 1973, Bishop Schuckardt placed the entire lay community on interdict in order to force the lay people to sign loyalty oaths to him and the TLRC, ex-members say. (Interdict is a traditional church practice, rarely imposed in modern times, whereby a Catholic, while still remaining in communion with the church, is forbidden the use of all or certain sacraments.)

The interdict was not suspended by the bishop until every family member, including the older children, signed the loyalty oaths, Mrs. Case said.

Responding that he did place the entire TLRC community on interdict, Bishop Schuckardt said: "The ex-members have exaggerated their side of the story. We had a number of parents who were completely in disagreement with the policies of our schools . . . We simply wanted to know who was with us and who was not."

• Members have donated substantial sums of money to the TLRC as well as to special fund drives, such as the building and legal assistance funds, but they have neither requested nor received voluntarily a financial account of the assets and debts of the church, said Mrs. Case.

"The TLRCl's unwritten code of ethics forbids such questions, lest members impugn the honesty and holiness of their leaders by asking where their money is being spent," she said.

Mrs. Case and other ex-members say they feel TLRC leaders are amassing a large sum of money from donors to the sect.

Bishop Schuckardt responded that the TLRC has been operating at a deficit ever since the sect was founded. Current property sales around the Mount, however, have given the church a few extra resources lately, he said.

He has never prepared a financial report on the debts and assets of the TLRC because "the members have never requested such a report," he said.

• In the community-run bookstore in Coeur d'Alene, the TLRC leader has ordered the Sisters who operate the store to razor out certain pages in Catholic books because they contain "heresies," say ex-members.

In the same manner, paragraphs in some of these traditional Catholic books have been censored by pasting a white strip of paper over the objectionable sentences. Moreover, all book publishers' names and addresses have been obliterated from the books to prevent members ordering other books directly from these publishers, Mrs. Case said.

All these practices are designed to keep members in the dark about Schuckardt's heretical teachings, ex-members said.

Bishop Schuckardt denied this claim, saying: "We censor some of the books because we cannot in good conscience sell anything that is contrary to the Catholic faith." Regarding substitution of the name and address of book publishers with a sticker bearing the name and address of the TLRC bookstore, "I have felt that this was the customary practice of all Catholic bookstores to do that," Schuckardt said.

Question discouraged

• Ex-members contend there is a concentrated effort on the part of Bishop Schuckardt and TLRC leaders to discourage individual quesetions and personal investigations about what is said in their lectures and sermons.

"The TLRC leaders constantly repeat to their members: 'If you continually question every little thing that we say, you will lose your faith,' " said Mrs. Harry Nillson (pseudonym), an ex-member who spent more than three years in the sect.

"Bishop Schuckardt constantly drills his followers that one doubt concerning TLRC rules and practices by a member is liable to open the door to his damnation," said James Nolan (pseudonym), another ex-member.

"His line of reasoning states that one moment of weakness leads to another, and then to still others after that, until the member has turned into a reprobate. Therefore, no member dares put himself into a position of any kind of doubting, lest he nudge the first domino into falling."

Moreover, "Schuckardt has an uncanny way of blending an element of truth into everything he says in order to mislead his members," Nolan continued.

"For example, Schuckardt tells his people to put religion first, deny yourself and surrender your will to the church — all good religious principles," Nolan said. "But the way these ideals are carried out in the TLRC is that the member sacrifices his family, his free will, his understanding of Catholicism and morality, and ultimately his immortal soul to Schuckardt — ***the leader of the church*** — because he supposedly is the only person who knows how to best care for them" Nolan said.

TLRC members do not allow themselves to doubt anything that Schuckardt says or does because they believe he is the only authority on the state of their souls, ex-members said.

Schuckardt also implements certain Catholic teachings and practices into the TLRC while completely ignoring other Catholic (pre-Vatican II) teachings, ex-members added.

The TLRC prelate justifies this selective form of Catholic teachings by asserting that the TLRC is living in the latter days. "It is impossible to stay true to all of the church's canon law" and Catholic traditions because of the apocalyptic times and sect's small size, Schuckardt said.

A third characteristic of a cult, according to Dr. Galper, is that "it deals in absolutes and believes that the outside world is absolutely evil."

"Bishop Schuckardt would depict to us that everything and every person outside the TLRC community was literally possessed with evil spirits," said an ex-TLRC religious brother.

TLRC members are indoctrinated into believing that the TLRC is the last sanctuary for God's faithful, other ex-members claim. "The TLRC is depicted by its leaders as a religious island surrounded by a great chasm which separates God's chosen people from the rest of the world," Nolan adds.

Few members leave the sect because leaders have indoctrinated them into believing that only the TLRC offers the true sacraments, ex-members say. Without these sacraments, the members believe they will be eternally separated from Christ with no hope of reconciliation.

The four schools operated by the TLRC (a grade and high school for each sex) also play an exaggerated religious role in the members' lives. "Members believe their children will succumb to the sexual immorality and drug abuse prevalent in many schools, several ex-members said.

According to TLRC policy, parents are required to send children to TLRC schools. Parents are barred from the sacraments if they do not comply with this rule, said a TLRC spokesman.

The two TLRC schools operated at Spokane's Mount St. Michael are not in compliance with Washington State's standards for private schools nor are the schools' instructors certified by the state, said school officials in Olympia.

County school district officials are currently looking into these violations of local and state private school laws.

Parents can be prosecuted under the state's compulsory student attendance law if they send their children to non-accredited schools, said one school official in Olympia.

Parents allow their children to endure corporal punishments in school for trifling matters in order to stay in the TLRC-run schools, ex-members claim.

A son was twice given 40 hacks along with approximately 34 other boys for failing classroom assignments, Mrs. Case said.

On other occasions, students were forced to eat soap for breaking school rules, among other forms of corporal punishments, ex-members said.

"So many mothers were crying about the corporal punishment and verbal abuse of their children in the schools, but we accepted these things because we felt that the TLRC was the true church," Mrs. Case said, recalling her years in the sect.

Drilled constantly

"Bishop Schuckardt constantly drilled into us that we were the last Catholics and that we would have to suffer extraordinary trials and grievous penances for the sake of the church," Mrs. Case said.

The TLRC leader claims the ex-members' statements are a distortion of what he said and what occurred in the TLRC. He does, however, believe the TLRC is the true Roman Catholic Church, and that God raised up the TLRC to save the souls of Catholics.

Virtually everybody else in the world, including all Catholics professing allegiance to Rome, are destined to hell, Schuckardt said.

A fourth characteristic of a cult, according to Dr. Galper, is that "it inflicts constant mental pressure on the members, often causing a radical personality change."

"TLRC leaders stress that the devil has declared an all-out war on your souls and the community, causing members to suffer from severe mental strain," Mrs. Nillson said.

"We were told that our weapons to combat Satan were work, prayer, penance and sacrifice, but soon it became evi-

dent that no matter what you did or how much you accomplished for the church, you always fall short of what God expected," she said.

This led to guilt feelings and a poor self-image on the part of members who were striving to pattern their lifestyles after Catholic saints, she continued.

In addition, Bishop Schuckardt over-emphasized the "fallen nature" of his followers, Mrs. Nillson said. "I soon became obsessed with the feeling that I was going to be damned. Even if I made an honest mistake, I felt I would be damned."

Other ex-members echoed her sentiments, saying the end-result of the TLRC's teachings is "a gradual and definite loss of hope."

In addition, ex-members contend that a distorted emphasis on "God before everyone else" was evident in the church.

"The bishop would use the fear of God to keep you in line. One of his most devious ploys is to accuse you in a subtle but consistent way that you love your son, daughter, or close family member more than God," said Mrs. Nillson. This kind of negative approach to the love of God has destroyed the unity of many families in the TLRC, she said.

Members primarily experience "confusion, fatigue, low self-esteem and an unhealthy preoccupation with sins and failures" in the TLRC, these ex-members conclude.

Bishop Schuckardt denies that any form of mental pressure or indoctrination is practiced in the TLRC, saying that the objective of the TLRC is the spiritual formation of its members.

"Most of our ex-members joined the TLRC because they only wanted the Latin Mass and not the total life of a Catholic, which is following a crucified Lord," he said.

Ex-members interviewed by the *Inland Register* take issue with Schuckardt, saying the TLRC is a front for a "personality cult of Francis Schuckardt."

(Ed. note: Five interviews were conducted with Bishop Francis Schuckardt for this series. In the last interview, Bishop Schuckardt said his responses to allegations by ex-TLRC members [which he made in our fourth interview and which are included in the above article] are "not authentic." The prelate said he was suffering from a severe migraine headache at the time of the fourth interview and that he does not recall the contents of the interview. Frater Denis Chicoine, TLRC vicar general who sat in on the inteview as an observer, later informed him that some of his answers to interview questions were "confused," Bishop Schuckardt said.)

TLRC fair — **The TLRC has sometimes combatted adverse publicity with an open house and carnival for the interested public. Guided tours of some of the areas of their facility, booths, and games are often part of their display.**

Schuckardt's consecration

Chapter 7

To some former confidants, Francis Konrad Schuckardt, leader of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church, is like the hero of a classic Greek tragedy — a man who had great potential for good but, "through some fatal flaw" lost this chance, bringing ruin upon himself and others.

To his followers, however, Schuckardt is a man acting out a role in a much bigger drama. To them, he is an instrument of God whose mission on earth is to rescue the reign of the Roman Catholic Church from popes, cardinals, bishops and theologians who have sacrificed the faith to the winds of time.

Some of his ex-associates say that pride may be the reason Schuckardt fell away from the church. His charismatic personality and dynamic preaching have an enormous impact on practically all who hear him. Such innate ability to control and influence people couldn't have gone unnoticed by the young, devout man, his critics say.

Formed own church

So, when Schuckardt's hopes for priestly ordination were dashed because of ill-health; when he was ostracized by his fellow Catholics because of his over-zealousness (and to some, a lack of depth and knowledge of the faith); and when Pope Paul VI instituted changes in the church he didn't agree with, Francis Schuckardt took part of the power base he had helped to build as a member of the traditionalist Blue Army and formed his own church, the Tridentine Latin Rite Church.

But his followers will tell you that it was God, not pride, who stepped in and led him to form his church, and that the only loss he suffered was the wreckage of a once pure Catholic faith as a result of Vatican II.

He didn't change, the church did, his supporters argue.

When the church revised its rites and rituals, Schuckardt claimed these changes were "heresies." When nearly every Roman Catholic in the world accepted Vatican II changes, he interpreted this as the "Great Apostacy" predicted by St. Paul, and as the "latter days" spoken of by Jesus when he predicted: "The very elect will be deceived."

Whatever his motives, Francis Schuckardt is determined to secure the hearts and souls of his followers for the cause he believes in and for the church he founded — regardless of the price, both his followers and ex-followers say.

Many of his church's members will tell you that they are attracted to him because "he is a man who does not compromise."

Carl South, a trusted friend and consultant who has been with him for about 10 years, said of him, "Sure, I've seen him do things that I disagreed with, but the end result has always been the salvation of souls. That is all that he is interested in — souls."

Reverence for the often-ailing bishop sometimes approaches adulation.

"No one could say anything critical about Schuckardt in the TLRC," remembers Mrs. Margie Skarisky, an ex-member. "The members felt that he was a living saint — maybe even more than a saint."

One ex-member reported that she saw members requesting his handkerchiefs or other personal items because they too thought he was a saint and they believed these items could be relics someday.

Stopping short of "canonizing" him, his followers do have high praise for their leader.

'Like Moses'

"He is a very holy man. He is like Moses leading the children of the Israelites in the wilderness," said Mrs. Jeanine Grenier, a long-time member of the TLRC founded by Schuckardt in 1968.

"If you really knew our bishop, you would think the best restaurants in town none too good for him, a true Prince of the Church and surely an all-time great," wrote a dedicated follower to a Spokane newspaper last year.

"He is a genius," said Mrs. Jonas Puskorious, a long-time follower. "I definitely feel that he was chosen by God to preserve the church in the latter days — and it takes an extraordinary man to do that," she said.

But an important figure in Schuckardt's past sees it another way, observing that the organizational and speaking talents of the TLRC leader may be leading Schuckardt and his followers astray.

Bishop Daniel Q. Brown, a schismatic Old Roman Catholic Church (ORCC) bishop from Toledo, Ohio, ordained and consecrated Schuckardt in 1971.

Old Roman Catholic Church

The ORCC began in Europe over two centuries ago. Leaders of a small Catholic contingent in Holland broke away from the Roman Catholic Church in 1723 and started their own "Catholic" church. Originally known as the Church of Utrecht, the schismatic sect has become known as the Old Roman Catholic Church in America.

Bishop Brown made the following comments on Schuckardt's role as TLRC leader.

"From information I have on the (former) Coeur d'Alene group, it seems that they have developed into a personality cult with Bishop Schuckardt as the center. There is no doubt that Bishop Schuckardt possesses great charisma and it is his personality which formed the group and has held it together.

Almost absolute power

"However, there is some peril in such a situation where one man holds an almost absolute power over his followers. Power, unless disciplined, can be intoxicating and I fear that Bishop Schuckardt may have succumbed to its allures.

"A discussion on this subject could become very complex but to simplify it, I have observed that his followers look upon him as being not only infallible but even impeccable — a virtue which not even the pope claims to have. In turn, he has convinced them that they are a special people or the elite . . . . "

Other former friends of Schuckardt seem to agree with Bishop Brown.

Francis Schuckardt has always lived with a "deep-seated sense of specialty," said Mrs. Sarah Hoffman of Issaquah, Wash. No longer on speaking terms with Schuckardt, she and her husband, John, were close to him in the late 60s and early 70s.

From their close friendship with him, the Hoffmans learned that Schuckardt saw himself as a "man set apart by God for some special mission," they said.

This "sense of specialty," in Schuckardt surfaced in October of 1971, when he obtained priestly and episcopal orders from Bishop Brown, they said. The ceremony took place in a rented motel conference room in Chicago, in the presence of approximately 25 TLRC members.

Consecration illicit

Schuckardt's critics claim that according to church law, his consecration by Bishop Brown is illicit.

Church law requires that bishops be appointed by the pope and, once consecrated, to act in union with the church under the guidance of the pope. A bishop (or priest) who acts in

TLRC leader — **Bishop Francis K. Schuckardt blesses members of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church as he enters the Mount St. Michael gymnasium for a church program. Schuckardt's priestly and episcopal orders are not licit in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church. He was consecrated by a schismatic bishop in 1971 after both Schuckardt and his consecrator renounced Pope Paul VI as a true pope.**

union with Rome is said to have licit as well as valid orders (apostolic succession).

In the eyes of the church, unauthorized ordinations or consecrations by a bishop who has not been appointed by the pope or who does not act in union with Rome are illicit and sacrilegious.

Priestly and episcopal powers, however, are irrevocable by the church. Even though he has broken away (or is excommunicated) from the church, a suspended bishop still holds the powers to ordain a priest or consecrate a bishop to valid orders as long as the suspended bishop himself was consecrated validly and the proper form and intention of the rite is observed.

Therefore, even though a bishop or priest ordained by an excommunicated bishop can be said to have valid orders, the orders are illicit because the ordaining bishop was not in union

with the pope at the time of the ceremony.

The Vatican, in this case, can only warn the Catholic faithful to stay clear of the unlawful priest or bishop and to stress that the administration of the sacraments by the unlawful priest or bishop (or those ordained by him) is condemned by the Catholic Church.

The orders of Bishop Brown's Old Roman Catholic Church have never been recognized as "licit" by the Roman Catholic Church because of the ORCC's split from Rome and the papacy in 1723. The breakaway church does, however, have valid orders because the founder of the ORCC was validly ordained before he split from Rome.

The ORCC believes in the seven sacraments, the Mass, the veneration of the Mother of God, and the invocation of angels and saints, but denies the papacy, according to William Whalen, author of the book *Separated Brethren*.

While advocating celibacy, it does not forbid its clergy to marry.

Bishop Brown was married and the father of two children when he consecrated Schuckardt a bishop in 1971, a fact that has brought much criticism from ex-members.

Schuckardt, however, points out that clergy in the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church can marry.

Those who question Schuckardt's consecration also point out that Bishop Arnold Mathew, an ORCC prelate living at the turn of this century, was excommunicated and anathematized (the church's severest form of excommunication) by Pope St. Pius X in 1911. Pius X took the action after Mathew, who was a Roman Catholic priest, had himself consecrated illegally by an ORCC bishop.

"How can Schuckardt, who preaches that all the decrees of the pre-Vatican II popes should be followed, justify his consecration when one of the bishops in his lineage was excommunicated by a saint?" many of his critics have asked.

Heresies renounced

Schuckardt responds that Bishop Brown "abjured" (or renounced) the heresies of the Old Roman Catholic Church and made profession of faith to the Roman Catholic Church before Schuckardt was consecrated.

"Therefore, I am a Roman Catholic bishop" despite the heresies and excommunications found in the ORCC, and in his episcopal lineage, Schuckardt said.

Schuckardt said, however, that Brown's profession of faith was not to Pope Paul VI, whom both men considered to be a false pope, but to the Roman Catholic Church which, according to Brown and Schuckardt, is without a pope.

Schuckardt calls Brown's abjuration, which was performed before witnesses, legitimate because "priests and bishops who had involved themselves in the Arian heresies of the Fifth Century performed the same, simplified rite to return to the church."

Since Brown and Schuckardt both believe that all Roman Catholic bishops had apostacized their faith by accepting the "heresies" of Vatican II, they claimed in 1971 that they were "the only true Roman Catholic bishops left in the world."

Rift developed

A rift developed between the two a year or so after the consecration. Brown accused Schuckardt of duplicity in requesting ordination and consecration from his hands.

In a letter written to former TLRC member Robert Klotz of Post Falls, Idaho, in June 1975, Brown outlines some of his grievances concerning Schuckardt.

"The arrangement (at the time of consecration) was that we were to form two dioceses with each of us to head up one," he writes in the letter. "However, I was never able to bring him to a decision about diocesan boundaries . . . .

"It became painfully obvious to me that he had no intention whatever of sharing episcopal authority but, on the contrary, his aim was to 'take over' and crowd me out."

In the letter, Bishop Brown also contradicted Schuckardt's version of events leading up to his consecration in Chicago.

'Great reluctance'

In a tape-recorded message to his followers after his consecration, Schuckardt said he had "great reluctance to accept consecration as bishop." He chose to become a bishop because "I would have to answer to eternity for saying 'No' to the continuation of the Catholic Church in the catacombs," Schuckardt states in the tape.

Bishop Brown had listened to the 1972 tape recording prior to writing his letter to Klotz.

"The truth is that my intention was only to ordain him to the priesthood and then at some later date — within two or three years — to make him a bishop," Bishop Brown wrote. "However, he was so insistent that it was absolutely necessary for him to be consecrated bishop immediately that I gave in — to my eternal regret — and gave him episcopal consecration. His much vaunted 'humility' was not in evidence at that time!" the consecrator wrote.

Bishop Brown said he now feels he was "used" by Schuckardt to gain the episcopacy.

Bishop Schuckardt said that Brown's statements in the letter are the product of "a poor, pitiful, senile man who is lying."

Schuckardt also said Bishop Brown reverted to the heresies of Old Catholicism by insisting that an ORCC priest say Mass whenever Brown felt too tired or ill to do it himself.

By doing this, Schuckardt claims, Brown excommunicated himself from the "true Catholic Church" and forced the two men to separate.

In another letter to an ex-member, Bishop Brown wrote that Schuckardt has "a strong hold on his followers."

A majority of ex-members interviewed for this series call Schuckardt a "skilled mesmerizer who uses brainwashing tactics on his followers."

One-on-one appeal

Many ex-members also say their former leader has an overpowering one-on-one appeal.

"While a member, I knew TLRC brothers who told me that they had spent all night talking with Schuckardt saying it was the greatest spiritual experience they had ever had," said one ex-member who wished to be unidentified.

Schuckardt's ability to create empathy in his listeners plays a key role in attracting and holding his members, according to another ex-member who describes Schuckardt this way:

"Bishop Schuckardt is a very attractive man personally because of his appearance of holiness. People can trust and confide in him very easily.

"In his talks, he arouses the emotions more than the intellect. He instills sorrow and guilt. Consequently, there follows humility and obedience to him.

"The content of his sermons is more emotionally or sensibly oriented than theologically oriented. This is how I feel he holds his people to him.

"They all regard him as a saint," the ex-associate continued. "They look upon themselves as humble sinners and, of course, they want to follow the saint and not trust themselves. In his sermons, he constantly reinforces this attitude — that they are sinners, that they should always believe themselves to be guilty, and that they should be humble and obedient to their superiors. I feel Schuckardt exaggerates this notion or this relationship between Religious superior and inferior — not basing it on anything objective but really on his own personal interpretation.

"The members are always fearful, always guilty, always fearful of damnation. They fear doing anything wrong, and they receive consolation only in him because they feel he is holy and that he will lead them to God," the ex-member added.

Bishop Schuckardt

Francis Schuckardt was born on July 10, 1937 in Seattle, Wash., he said. He graduated from O'Dea Catholic High School in 1954 and Seattle University in 1959. He majored in education and linguistics. Schuckardt also took four years of theology and philosophy at the university because "I was thinking of entering the priesthood" at the time, he said.

After college graduation, Schuckardt entered a seminary but was unable to complete one year because of "ill health," he said.

He returned to Seattle and worked as a Linguistic Research Analyst and also taught in a high school there.

During this time, he was also active in the Blue Army of Our Lady, an international Catholic organization dedicated to the promotion of the Blessed Virgin Mary's message at Fatima. He had joined the group in 1958.

In 1961, Schuckardt was stricken with typhoid; this was the beginning of a long succession of illnesses. Schuckardt was in and out of a coma for eight days and the doctors finally advised his family that the end would come by morning.

In his extremity, Schuckardt prayed to the Blessed Virgin and the next morning, instead of dying, he asked for food and dictated to a nurse the details of a Blue Army cell (study) program which is now being used all over the world by the Blue Army, according to a short biographical article in a Blue Army magazine printed in the late 1960s.

Schuckardt's remarkable recovery in 1961 was followed by another "miracle" in January of 1963 when he was hospitalized with thrombophlebitis of the legs, the article continued. The infection had spread and the doctors had decided they had to amputate.

The young man again prayed to the Blessed Virgin and promised that if she would save his legs, he would "use them to travel and to extend the cell program wherever you want me to go."

Again, the illness inexplicably reversed itself and Schuckardt's legs were saved, according to the article.

Blue Army secretary

Because of the success of the Blue Army cell programs all over the world, Schuckardt was elected to the International Council of the Blue Army when he was only 26 — the first time anyone other than a national head of the Blue Army was ever given membership in the International Council. He was later appointed international secretary of the council.

Schuckardt traveled extensively around the globe lecturing to groups of Catholics on an average of more than once a day. Schuckardt speaks many languages fluently, including Spanish, French, German, Latin and some Portuguese and Italian.

Then, the Vatican II changes in the Roman Catholic Church also changed the course of Schuckardt's life.

As the international secretary of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima, Schuckardt spoke to thousands each year on the rosary and the message of Fatima. He began to put his personal views on the "New Rite" of the Mass, the changes sweeping the Catholic Church, and "the invalidity of Paul VI's papacy" into his lectures. Most of the audiences turned away from him; but some clung to him because of his zeal to speak out against Rome concerning matters that they felt were "destroying" their faith.

In 1967, the Blue Army dismissed its international secretary from its ranks for his actions.

But the die had already been cast in Schuckardt's eyes. He and his handful of followers did not want to stay with an organization that still swore allegiance to Pope Paul VI.

Set up mission tours

The years following Vatican II could not have been riper for Schuckardt to gather the conservative dissidents who had fallen away from the Roman Catholic Church. He set up his own mission tours and gathered his own converts.

Ironically, Schuckardt reached some of his future followers in the very Roman Catholic convents, seminaries and retreat houses where he had so fervently lectured for the Blue Army. The administrators, unaware of Schuckardt's change in belief, knew only of his Blue Army reputation and had not yet learned that he denied Rome and the papacy.

Today, Schuckardt still suffers from phlebitis, blood clotting and a severe migraine condition. His illness over the years has forced him to adopt a nocturnal schedule for carrying out his administrative duties, he said. He has gained a reputation for being a "night owl" among his members.

"It is difficult for me to be on a schedule," Schuckardt said.

"When I am not in bed confined with illness, I get up and work. And when I am not able to work, I stay in bed — which is most of the time."

He has been attacked by former associates for allegedly taking advantage of his sickness and using it to gain a psychological hold over his people.

Illness causes delays

His illness forces church members to wait, sometimes as much as three to four hours for the start of important church functions or personal appointments. His followers unanimously agree their bishop is "truly sick."

Near death many times in his life, according to TLRC members, Bishop Schuckardt's poor health has caused many to wonder what will happen to the TLRC when its founder dies.

There seems to be one obvious answer to that question.

In all probability, the TLRC's vicar general, Frater Denis Chicoine, will succeed Schuckardt as head of the church. Frater Chicoine has been with Schuckardt since they both broke from the Blue Army in 1968. He was the first priest Schuckardt ordained after being consecrated.

In fact, Frater Chicoine may have already been consecrated a bishop in secret ceremonies, a Religious Brother told the *Inland Register*. Both he and the bishop may be withholding this news until after the death of Schuckardt when Chicoine would produce "the official church papers revealing the time and date of his consecration," the Brother speculated.

If this is true, there appears to be little doubt the TLRC will continue its ministry unabated under the leadership of the hard-working Chicoine, who enjoys much better health than Schuckardt.

1985 update of TLRC

From almost its first year, ugly scars of strife have marred the public image of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church. Most of the scars are wounds suffered within its own ranks — members tearing away from the controversial sect in bitter divisions that have led even into the courtroom.

Yet no one could have imagined the bizarre scene in the summer of 1984 when a dozen TLRC brothers came to blows in the front yard of the breakaway Catholic sect's South Hill Priory.

The melee at the Spokane priory peaked a bitter clash between Bishop Francis Schuckardt, the controversial TLRC leader, and his second-in-command, Frater Denis Chicoine, the sect's vicar general.

Chicoine claimed he and his Religious brothers were at the elegant mansion to confront Schuckardt with allegations of moral misconduct recently leveled at the bishop by local news media.

Bishop Schuckardt countered that he and his aides knew Chicoine was at the priory to stage a coup against the bishop after diabolically turning members against him through a campaign of "lies and slander."

When Chicoine and a band of brothers began to keep watch on the priory in order to see the bishop, Schuckardt said he began to fear for his life. He hurriedly made plans to flee Spokane and ordered about 20 loyal followers to pack up church belongings, including the furniture of the priory, and prepare to move out immediately.

Ugly confrontations

During these preparations, the two factions collided in ugly confrontations on the front lawn.

On June 4, while Schuckardt loyalists were loading a van with furniture and other valuables from the priory, Religious brothers aligned with Chicoine hopped into the van and hijacked it. As the van sped down the the priory's paved driveway, a Schuckardt supporter armed himself with a gun. According to a local newspaper account, another Brother tried to knock the weapon out of his hand, causing the gun to discharge as the van careened down the driveway of the mansion. The vehicle crashed through a closed security gate and roared away through the normally quiet residential neighborhood.

The police were called and detectives swarmed over the premises, separating the two warring factions and posting a 24-hour guard at the priory to keep the religious row from turning deadly.

The investigation was stymied at first by reluctant witnesses at the scene, police said. Later, police ruled that the gunshot had been accidental.

Chicoine then turned to the courts, and on June 15 he gained a ruling in Spokane County Superior Court which barred Schuckardt from returning to church headquarters at Mount St. Michael's and the church priory located at E2314 South Altamount Blvd. in Spokane.

Bishop Schuckardt did not appear for the June 15 hearing to argue his case. He and about 20 followers had already fled the state, allegedly absconding with church records and as much as $250,000 hurriedly withdrawn from local bank accounts. In his ruling, Judge Harold Clarke ordered Bishop Schuckardt to return the estimated $250,000 which Frater Chicone claimed were funds and "other valuable property" which belonged to the TLRC, not its leader.

Chicoine said he was forced to oust Bishop Schuckardt because the leader had repeatedly engaged in homosexual activities with certain TLRC members and had adamantly refused to admit and repent of his "perversion."

In April, charges of homosexual conduct had been leveled at Bishop Shuckardt by four ex-TLRC members who each told a reporter from ABC-TV affiliate KXLY of separate incidents in which their former leader had called them to his bedroom to massage him. During these incidents, the ex-members said, Bishop Schuckardt would sometimes ask them to take off their clothes, disrobe him, and lay across his body. When contacted by KXLY television reporter Tracy Vedder, Bishop Schuckardt did not admit to the episodes.

Two months later, when Chicoine charged him with the same type of conduct, Bishop Schuckardt said that Chicoine was spreading "lies and slander" against him and that Chicoine, not he, was guilty of grave moral offenses which the ousted leader preferred to keep "off the record."

Exclusive interview

In an exclusive interview with Bishop Schuckardt held prior to the court hearing, Jeff Burnside, a reporter for CBS-TV affiliate KREM, visited the bishop in a Lewiston, Idaho, motel room. The bishop said he was "shocked and saddened" at his eviction from a sect he had led for nearly 20 years.

"It's incredible that those people with whom I worked all these years would believe the lies and slanders" of Chicoine, he said. The bishop said he was too ill to attend the court hearing and charged that Frater Chicoine maliciously filed the lawsuit, knowing that the ailing leader's health would not withstand the rigors of a courtroom confrontation.

When asked by the newsman whether he had any messages to pass on to his former co-leader and confidante, Bishop Schuckardt "excommunicated" Chicoine over the air.

Later, Frater Chicoine replied that he would be "excommunicated" every day if that is what it took to stop "perverted acts" from occuring in the TLRC. Chicoine also said that the bishop had no right to issue a valid excommunication. "We believe he is incompetent and that his acts are null and void," Chicoine said.

For months after they fled, Schuckardt and his loyalists were on the run, moving secretly through the Northwest, stopping at cities in five states and Canada, at first never daring to spend more than one night in the same place. They believed that Chicoine had sent men to assassinate Schuckardt, an allegation that Chicoine scoffed at.

Ever since it was founded, the TLRC had been guided by Schuckardt and Chicoine, whom some ex-members recall as "inseparable." Although plagued with ill health, Schuckardt kept a firm hand on the sect while often delegating powers to the more energetic Chicoine, an adept organizer.

Remarkable growth

Under their guidance, the TLRC experienced some remarkable years of growth, both in terms of members and funds. In 1977, it purchased Mount St. Michael's, a former Jesuit theologate, and its surrounding 735 acres in northeast Spokane at a price in excess of $1.5 million.

During these golden years, however, the two men drifted apart and became estranged. Ex-members have reported that Chicoine actually left the sect on at least two occasions. He was reportedly coaxed back by Schuckardt. Toward the end, theirs was an uneasy alliance that survived every storm but one.

With Bishop Schuckardt gone, the TLRC faced a seemingly impossible fight for survival. For years, Bishop Schuckardt and Chicoine had assured followers that they were looking for

other "true" and "orthodox" Catholic bishops that God might have raised up after the fall of the Roman Catholic Church during the Second Vatican Council, but the leaders of the sect were never able to locate such men in their travels throughout the United States and the world.

In effect, this futile search kept Schuckardt the sole leader of the sect, a position equivalent to the pope.

Disgruntled ex-members often accused their two former leaders of perpetrating a sham on their followers. They said no traditionalist bishop would ever meet the qualifications imposed by Schuckardt and Chicoine because the two men didn't want to share their authority with anybody. The purported search for other true Catholic bishops was just a ruse, they said.

Hence, when Bishop Schuckardt fell from grace after more than a decade of fruitless search for other "true" bishops, the TLRC's survival as a Catholic sect seemed hopeless. Without a bishop to ordain more priests and a successor, the TLRC would draw its last breath when its last priest did.

New leader

Yet, one year after Bishop Schuckardt fled Spokane, the sect came under the jurisdiction of a new episcopal leader: Bishop George Musey of Texas.

Like his predecessor, Bishop Musey was once completely dedicated to the Roman Catholic Church. He was ordained a priest for the Galveston-Houston Diocese, but he abruptly left the Church in the late 1960s, claiming ill health as the reason for his departure. After leaving the diocese, he turned against the Church for introducing "heretical" changes at Vatican II.

In the two decades that followed the council, the self-exiled priest worked at a family-owned restaurant, the Hofbrau Gardens, located in Dickinson, Texas, and became very active in the traditionalist Catholic movement. He often gave lectures and celebrated Mass for Catholics who had turned their backs on Rome.

In 1982, he sought and received an illicit episcopal consecration from a schismatic Catholic bishop, an act which led a year later to his formal excommunication from the Church.

Bishop Musey's and the TLRC's paths crossed and became one in 1985.

On April 23, Bishop Musey received Frater Denis Chicoine and two other priests from Mount St. Michael's "under his jurisdiction." Frater Chicoine apparently requested Bishop Musey to guide the TLRC after deciding that the bishop's beliefs were in accord with the sect.

To assure the faithful that the three men were still priests in good standing, even though they had been raised to the priesthood by Bishop Schuckardt, Bishop Musey conditionally ordained them again as priests.

In June, he ordained three other men as TLRC priests during a ceremony held at Mount St. Michael's. According to an eyewitness, Chicoine and the five TLRC priests knelt before Bishop Musey at the end of the ceremony. They vowed their allegiance to Musey and his traditionalist church.

'More challenging'

Bishop Musey invited a local CBS news reporter to interview him at Mount St. Michael's. When asked how he felt stepping into the leadership role after the scandal left in the wake of Bishop Schuckardt, Bishop Musey told the news audience, "Well, it obviously makes it more challenging and by the same token more rewarding. There are unique problems but also unique opportunities to exercise the grace of God in a group like this — wonderful people who have persevered through so much and have endured so many problems. The priests and people who are here — I am very grateful to God for having brought us here."

Pope John Paul II excommunicated Bishop Musey on April 7, 1983, citing the renegade priest for deliberately defying Church laws by being consecrated a bishop a year earlier in Galveston.

At the same time, the pope also excommunicated Bishop Musey's consecrator, Bishop Moyses Carmona of Acapulco. Radical schismatic Vietnamese Archbishop Pierre Martin Ngo Dinh Thuc, who had consecrated Carmona, and five other followers of Archbishop Thuc were also excommunicated.

In a telephone interview with the National Catholic News Service one week after his excommunication, Bishop Musey said the papal action was meaningless because he "never belonged to the Church of John Paul."

He added that his excommunication from the "Novus Ordo" church — the Catholic Church since Vatican II — is "tantamount to a letter from (the Rev.) Billy Graham that I don't belong to his church."

Echoing a refrain of Bishop Schuckardt and the TLRC, Bishop Musey declared the papal seat to be vacant. Those who support that stance and the traditionalist Mass are "what remains of the Mystical Body of Christ," he said.

In 1982, Bishop Musey told NC News that he had ordained a second American, Bishop Louis Vezellis, a former Franciscan who, he said, lives in Rochester, N.Y. Musey explained that he and Bishop Vezellis had divided the country into two dioceses, with himself the head of the western See and Vezellis the head of the eastern.

Born in Galveston on Sept. 14, 1928, Bishop Musey was ordained a priest of that diocese in 1952. He said that "since 1952 I have never changed the theology or liturgy I embraced at the time."

He recalled that in late 1962 or early 1963 a series of heart attacks and other illnesses began, and he was in and out of hospitals for the next several years.

Asked to retire

He said he could not celebrate Mass according to the directives of Vatican II and asked to retire from the diocese, officially for reasons of health, in the late 1960s.

Bishop John L. Morkovsky of the Galveston-Houston Diocese said that he does not recall receiving such a request from then-Father Musey. Bishop Morkovsky, who has headed the diocese since 1963, said he never considered Musey to be in good standing after he, Musey, departed the diocese.

Bishop Musey hopes to steer the treacherous rapids of public controversy better than Bishop Schuckardt.

Even before the allegations of homosexuality were aired against Bishop Schuckardt, the TLRC had been swamped by adverse publicity.

The TLRC has not fared well in the 1980s. During the first five years of the decade, the TLRC suffered three severe crises that seriously challenged its credibility as a legitimate traditionalist church. Those crises were:

1) a Nebraska State Supreme Court judgment against the sect;

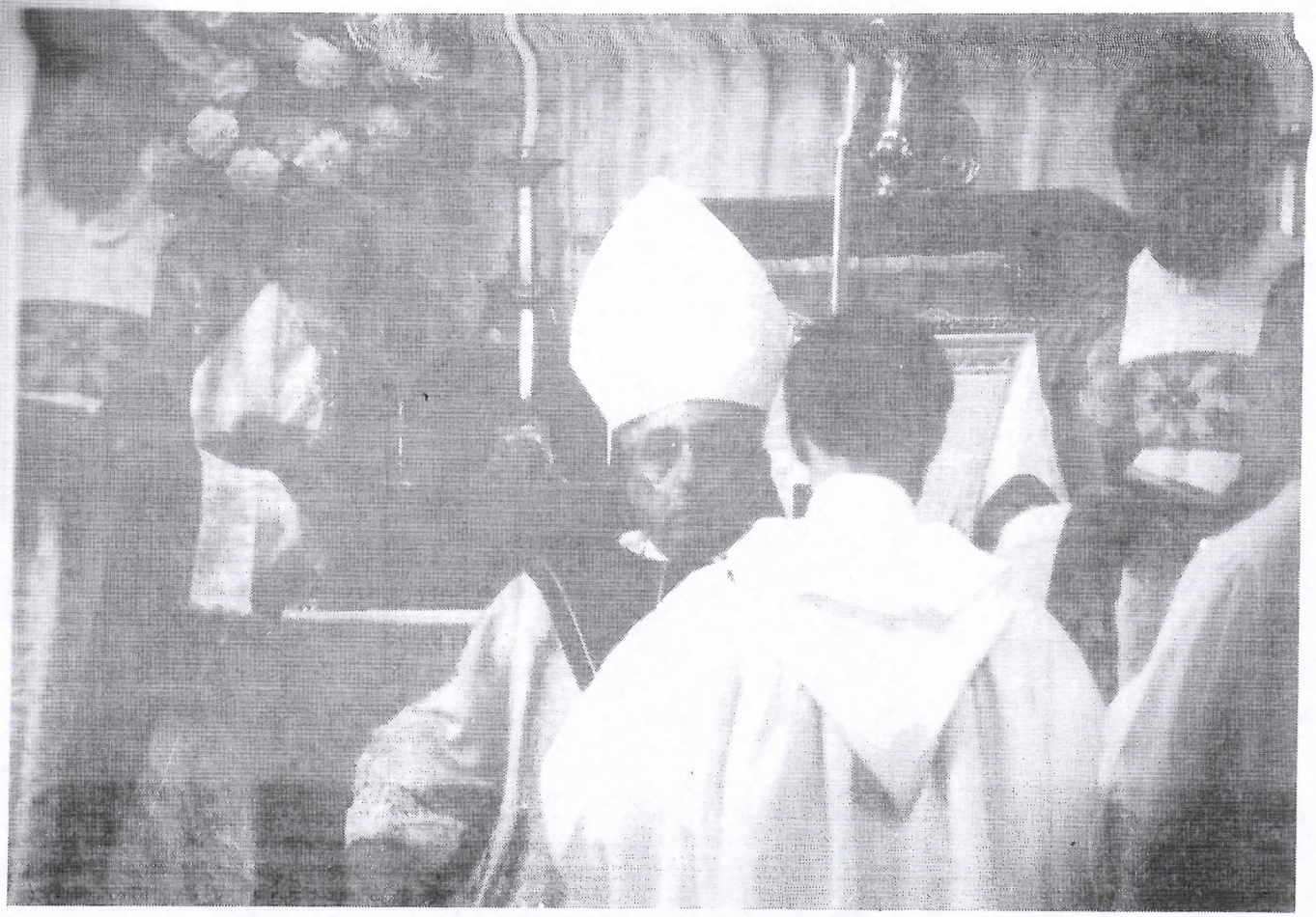
2) the founding of a Cult Awareness Center in Coeur d'Alene which publicly condemned the TLRC as a "destructive cult"; and

3) damaging media attention in New Zealand which scalded the TLRC bishop and his entourage during a religious tour of that country and Australia.

I. Supreme Court decision

In April 1981, the Nebraska State Supreme Court ruled that the religious beliefs of the Tridentine Latin Rite Church had an "adverse impact" on children.

In unanimous ruling on a child custody appeal, the court's seven members ordered that Jaime Burnham be placed in the permanent custody of her father, Dennis, ruling that the religious beliefs of the mother, Carolyn, a TLRC member, "may have an adverse impact" on the child because of her strict adherence to the "church laws" and "racist views" held by the TLRC.



New Leader — **Bishop George Musey of Texas crossed paths with the TLRC in 1985. He was apparently asked to guide the TLRC after it was determined his beliefs were in accord with the sect. To assure the faithful their priests were in good standing, even though raised to the priesthood by Bishop Schuckardt, Bishop Musey reportedly conditionally ordained them again as priests.**

In its opinion, the court cited three of Carolyn Burnham's beliefs — all specified in detail — which could harm her daughter, who was four years old at the time.

The specific areas cited by the court were Mrs. Burnham's belief that Jaime was illegitimate because her parents were not married in the TLRC; the willingness of Mrs. Burnham, elicited during court testimony, to cut Jaime out of her life if her daugher ever disobeyed TLRC rules; and the "racist views held by Carolyn and, apparently, her church."

"Although the courts should preserve an attitude of impartiality between religions and will not disqualify a parent solely because of his or her religious beliefs, we do have a duty to consider whether such beliefs threaten the health and well-being of the child," the high court said.

In handing down its decision, the court took into account a letter admitted into evidence at the trial. In the letter, Mrs. Burnham had written, "What surprised me the most, in finding out about true Catholicism, I have discovered that there exists in the world a master plot on the part of the Jews and Communists, to gain control of the world."

"This points out," the supreme court said, "the anti-Semitic views that Carolyn believes are being taught by the Tridentine Church and which she testified that she believed to be true."

"I have no quarrel with Carolyn's right to believe what she chooses to believe," said Warren Schrempp, her husband's attorney. "I took the Burnham case because I saw how Carolyn's beliefs could damage the well-being of her child. If Jaime were awarded to her mother the child could have ended up hating all Jews, whether they were good or bad," he said.

II. Cult Awareness Center

The Cult Awareness Center was established in the fall of 1981 and formally incorporated in May 1982. Composed of concerned citizens, the Center has relentlessly directed public attention to the practices of the TLRC — practices which it claims are identical to those of a "destructive" cult.

Father William Wassmuth, chairman of the Center's board of directors and pastor of St. Pius X Church in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, said the Center's staff has collected affidavits and conducted interviews with many ex-members which prove beyond reasonable doubt that the TLRC is a destructive cult.

The Center has documented that the TLRC employs deception in its recruiting and funding efforts, as well as behavior modification techniques to gain control over the lives of members, he said.

Although he had not researched Bishop Musey, Father Wassmuth offered his conjectures about the the past leaders of the sect.

Perhaps, he said, Bishop Schuckardt and Frater Chicoine are "disturbed enough" that "they really do believe what they are saying," and are unwittingly leaning on destructive cult techniques to further their purported divine goals.

But, "on the other hand, there is a lot of evidence that says this is not true," Father Wassmuth said. "Ex-members have told us that in the TLRC's early years, Bishop Schuckardt would outline for them what he had in mind for the sect. These sessions indicated to former members that he had calculated all his actions to gain absolute control over his followers, not to advance a church.

"The control he achieved over members wasn't something

that he fell into. He would plan things, saying, 'This is what we are going to do, but we can't do it right now because the people won't buy it yet.' Or, 'We must go stage by stage.' It was all pre-planned on his part.

"When you hear reports like these, you have to start wondering whether this is something he does not consider a divine mission, that there is some ulterior motivation here, that he does know he is manipulating people."

And what about Denis Chicoine? Was he duped and manipulated, too?

"Chicoine has been Schuckardt's right-hand man from the start, the enforcer of things," Father Wassmuth said. "He certainly knew everything that was going on. He can't claim ignorance. It's hard to put him in a better light than Schuckardt."

Father Wassmuth founded the Cult Awareness Center with Barbara Strakal, who once invited the priest to counsel an ex-TLRC member employed at a local restaurant managed by her husband, Sid. The counseling session sparked conversations with other former wounded members.

"We knew we had to do something to help all these ex-members," Father Wassmuth said. "We started the Cult Awareness Center and invited a nationally recognized expert on cults, Kent Burtner, a Dominican priest, to Coeur d'Alene for a Cult Awareness Week. We gathered a group of people together and formed a board, and that's how we got started."

Seminars held

The Cult Awareness Center, currently directed by a board of directors, monitors and keeps records on all cults operating in the Pacific Northwest, such as the Aryan Nations and the Unification Church. It has held seminars on cults for law enforcement personnel and other professionals in the Washington-Idaho region.

The most positive and tangible goals achieved by the Center in its short history, Father Wassmuth said, included disseminating information on cults, strengthening families who have left a cult, and helping teenagers who have run away from a cult become united with families who have moved to another state.

"I think we have helped a lot of individuals," Father Wassmuth said. "That's where our successes are."

On a larger scale, although on an admittedly "more ambiguous scale," Father Wassmuth said he believes the Center is responsible for the "confusion" which rocked the TLRC in 1984 and forced Schuckardt to flee the sect.

The television exposure given Schuckardt's homosexual leanings "might have happened anyway, but I believe it was instigated by the reporter's contacts with the Cult Awareness Center," Father Wassmuth said. "We definitely encouraged the news media to look into former members' allegations."

Father Wassmuth said the only problem with the television stories about Schuckardt was that they "pointed too much at Schuckardt and not enough at the whole group. In the news report, Schuckardt became the scapegoat. TLRC logic would have us believe that since Schuckardt is gone, its cult problems are also gone. That is not necessarily true."

'Devils incarnate'

Father Wassmuth said he and Mrs. Strakal have been publicly condemned from the pulpit of Mount St. Michael's as being "devils incarnate" for their work in the Cult Awareness Center.

A member's life expectancy in a destructive cult is not very long, whether that be the TLRC, the Moonies, or any other cult, Father Wassmuth said. He believes the TLRC has been losing members because of the scandal with Schuckardt and other inherent problems, and is finding fewer Catholics disenchanted with the changes in the Church to recruit. This could force the TLRC to change its "dogma"to attract more members.

"It is even possible for a destructive cult to gradually move out of that mode and become respectable," Father Wassmuth said. "If the TLRC does that under Bishop Musey, the Cult Awareness Center will back off. If we see signs that these destructive cult techniques are gone, we will leave them alone. We have no theological quarrel with them; our debates concern justice and human rights for members."

III. Trouble in New Zealand

Around December 1982, Bishop Schuckardt and an entourage of followers embarked on a visit to New Zealand and Australia.

"It was not a happy visit," wrote Graeme Kennedy, a reporter for the *Auckland Star* in New Zealand, who tracked the TLRC entourage up and down his country.

Kennedy's report on the TLRC trip is typical of other news accounts of the visit. Unlike the heavily populated U.S.A., where foreigners are quickly swallowed up by the teeming masses, sparsely populated New Zealand offers visitors a giant bare stage where newcomers are easily observed by the local populace.

From their first step off the plane, the Tridentines were closely scrutinized by the press and public. In the party were two TLRC priests, five brothers, two deacons, seven nuns, and the bishop. Before long, news reporters were filling their papers with unflattering accounts of the strange group from the U.S.

Some incidents caught the eyes not only of reporters but the police as well. There were unpaid tabs for plush hotels where the bishop stayed as well as high long-distance phone bills left unpaid at the hotels. A Hertz rental car was repossessed from the group for nonpayment; two TLRC nuns, citing their vow of poverty, asked a Wellington jeweller for free gems and free repairs on their jewels — a request which the merchant refused. Other merchants and hotel owners claimed that the TLRC tricked them out free goods and services with pleas of poverty while Schuckardt resided in a $135-a-day hotel room.

The news media published these reports throughout New Zealand. In one story, a reporter estimated that the TLRC's three-month tour cost at least $20,000.

In an interview conducted by Kennedy of the *Auckland Star,* Bishop Schuckardt claimed the unpaid bills were a misunderstanding. He said, "In the U.S., it is customary for religious people to beg for food and accommodations. I have since discovered it is not customary here in New Zealand." He made arrangements to mail money for the bills.

Bishop Schuckardt also charged the local Catholic Church had generated all the bad publicity in order to discredit him and his followers.

Credibility lost

After the sect left the country, a rumor circulated that the TLRC planned to move its headquarters to New Zealand. Even if the rumor had been true, the TLRC had lost so much credibility with the local populace that it would have been forced to think twice before moving its members and possessions to New Zealand.

In a July 15, 1983 letter to the Cult Awareness Center, Archbishop Thomas Williams of Wellington summed up the final impact left by the TLRC group: "The area (in which) Schuckardt and his entourage concentrated much of their activity during their stay in the first months of this year, is tranquil. The handful of followers they recruited are silent and still.

"I would have to estimate the effect of Schuckardt's visit as virtually nil. The impression left behind was most negative. Newspaper and radio coverage was such as to leave readers and listeners with the conviction that the TLRC is a weird and suspect group whose activities are dishonest and distasteful."

At home, the TLRC faced another blow which seriously challenged its credibility in the eyes of the public.

In an alienation of affections suit, a First District Court judge in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, awarded a father of five children $1 million in damages from the TLRC.

Jerry O'Neil of Kalispel, Mont., had accused the sect of breaking up his eight-year marriage to his ex-wife, Pauline, and causing irreparable damage to the couple's five children. In his suit, O'Neil contended that Bishop Schuckardt and Chicoine had wrongfully and arbitrarily imposed church doctrine on the family, which resulted in the break-up of his marriage.

Bishop Schuckardt called a press conference after the decision and informed the news media that the $1 million judgment would bankrupt the TLRC and destroy the sect.

O'Neil's elation vanished after nine months. His court decision, handed down on Aug. 8, 1983, was overturned in May 1984. An appeals court judge ruled the case was "totally lacking in substantial competent evidence to support the verdict of the jury."

Reversal appealed

O'Neil has now appealed his reversal to the Idaho Supreme Court. Oral arguments were heard on April 9, 1985. At this writing, a decision is still pending.

Some light, however, pierced the shadows which fell over the TLRC in the early 1980s.

The sect bought some acreage in Colbert, Wash., and opened a new girls school in that state.

And an itinerant ministry began to reap profit and public acclaim. The TLRC's Singing Nuns of St. Cecelia's Chorale made several successful concert tours throughout the U.S. The group of nuns appeared on the nationally syndicated *Merv Griffin Show* and several *P.M. Magazine* television shows. They performed at Disneyland, the Sun Dome in Arizona, and other top tourist spots.

The Sisters gained public respect for the sect and drew in some lucrative donations as well.

The TLRC sorely needed this positive public interaction to offset the poor publicity it was facing at its headquarters, especially when a nationally recognized cult expert journeyed to Spokane and publicly called the TLRC a "destructive" cult.

Throughout its stormy history, the TLRC has faced allegations, particularly by ex-members, that it was a cult. The TLRC adroitly blocked such attacks with parries which included comparison of its "repressive" actions to those practiced in the pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church and by challenging its accusers to produce a universally recognized definition of a destructive cult.

If that strategy was not convincing to some, it nonetheless swayed many to reserve judgment on the sect. But when a cult expert traveled to the Inland Empire during the early 1980s, the impasse of the TLRC's cult status exploded into a thousand pieces.

Father Kent Burtner OP was a man vested with some imposing credentials in the area of cults. He had been counseling families and cult members since 1969 and assisted in many "cult exit" counseling sessions (also known as "deprogramming"). His anti-cult work had gained him national recognition and respect and had made him a leading expert in the field.

Carroll Stoner and JoAnne Parker included Father Burtner's work in *All God's Children,* a leading book on cults. In 1981, he lectured at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute during an in-service training program on cult-related mental health problems.

He also lectured extensively in the U.S. and Canada, in universities and before civic and religious organizations.

With a few spoken paragraphs, Father Burtner severely damaged the polished credibility of the TLRC after past torrents of words had hardly creased it.

Ordination — **Bishop Musey ordained this man, along with two others, as TLRC priests in June 1985.**

Father Burtner dogged the TLRC during his visits to the Spokane area, criticizing the schismatic sect for employing "deception and behavior modification" techniques. In his several speaking stops in the Inland Empire, the cult specialist, invited by the Cult Awareness Center, placed the TLRC on the same plane as the Unification Church, Hare Krishnas and the Children of God.

Mind control techniques

Father Burtner never specifically lectured against the TLRC. In his talks he merely listed the TLRC with other destructive cults, declaring unequivocally that the TLRC practiced deception and mind control techniques.

On May 18, 1983, Bishop Schuckardt attempted to combat this damage by going to a local television station to rebut a lecture Father Burtner had given a day earlier at Gonzaga University.

In an interview with a KXLY newsman, Bishop Schuckardt said, "Father Burtner has never been to Mount St. Michael's, he has never seen our way of life." Therefore, Bishop Schuckardt said, Father Burtner held no legitimate observation of the sect.

The TLRC was branded a cult because "we are unusual and seem anachronistic" to other people, Bishop Schuckardt said.

In an interview with the *Inland Register,* Father Burtner answered Bishop Schuckardt's reasoning — that the priest had no right to call the TLRC a cult until he gained first-hand experience of it. "This is equivalent to saying that you cannot know what Catholicism is without going to the Vatican and speaking with officials in the Vatican."

Acknowledging that he had received invitations to visit the Mount, Father Burtner said, "The irony here is that I could certainly go to the Mount, but it would be like having Madalyn Murray O'Hair show up at the Vatican — once she's there, what are you going to do with her?

"One may know a great deal about a group, about its behavior, about its practices by studying the group, by interviewing its members, by talking to people who have left the group and by talking to other people who have observed the group," he said. Father Burtner received such first-hand information through his work with the Cult Awareness Center.

Systematic use of guilt

Father Burtner said he saw that the TLRC's behavior modification techniques center around the systematic use of guilt.

"People are on heavy guilt trips in the TLRC, and these guilt trips go far beyond anything that even the most unreformed pre-Vatican II theology would have proposed."

He said that the "magnitude of guilt" in the TLRC is demonstrated in parents who actualy "throw their children out of their homes for fear of being excommunicated from the TLRC."

The guilt also forces parents to sign a waiver giving free license to the TLRC school to apply any form of corporal punishment it deemed necessary, while holding the school non-liable for any legal consequence. "This is simply irresponsible on the part of a parent. That comes as a result of a direct guilt threat," he said.

Moreover, the role of Mary, Catholic saints and even Francis Schuckardt are completely exaggerated in the TLRC and bare little resemblance to the real Mary, saints and true role of a leader, Father Burtner said.

Censorship and deception by the leaders prevent members from questioning their "education" on Catholic religious doctrine, he said.

"People must have access to information which is verifiable and which is contrary to what the group is telling them. Members must have the opportunity to think, reflect and judge data."

The TLRC does not allow members the right to evaluate their own thoughts and feelings in the light of a broad base of data about the group.

Father Burtner said he had no quarrel with the religious doctrine of the TLRC. "Doctrine in regard to a cult is quite irrelevant," he said. "A person can make a cult out of any authentic religious tradition. He or she only has to bend it a little bit to fit mind control techniques. This is what the Tridentines have done."

In a lecture, he elaborated on the deception and behavior modification techniques which a cult, such as the TLRC, might employ.

Deception used from start

A cult uses deception from the start, he said. "If a cult leader wants somebody for his cult, he is not going to ask the prospective member, 'Come to my church so I can brainwash you.'

"Instead, recruiters for cults will ask such things as 'Would you like to come with me to worship God better?' or 'Would you like to know yourself better?' while exhibiting 'instant friendship and concern' for the individual."

Once prospective members take the bait and set foot on the "turf" of the cult, leaders immediately attempt to pattern the newcomer's behavior. "Experts know that once you get persons to behave in a certain way, their thinking will usually follow their behavior," Father Burtner said.

The cult will use other members in the group to apply peer pressure to the newcomer. It is extremely difficult to spend a whole evening not doing what 40 others are doing all around you, Father Burtner said. To avoid becoming the oddball, the prospective member will join in, particularly since the individual will sense — falsely — that members are really concerned about him or her.

Along with patterning behavior, the cult will also try to stop all analytical thinking by their members, whether they are new recruits or longtime members. Cult leaders will both subtly and overtly pressure members to suspend critical faculties and throw away negativity and doubt.

Cults blame recruits and members for raising legitimate questions and doubts, Father Burtner said. A widely-used accusation of the cult is, "There is something wrong or evil in you because you are not looking at this from God's point of view," he said.

Hence, if a person has doubts, confusion or fears about the cult, the leaders will hold that person accountable for "bad thoughts" about the cult. The leaders convince the member that his or her feelings are moral actions for which he or she must be held responsible. "The catch here is that feelings are never inherently good or bad. It is what you do with those feelings that make you good or bad," he said.

Name of the game is guilt

The name of the game here is guilt, and "guilt is the way a leader endures," Father Burtner said.

The more a cult can assume control of another person's vulnerability and guilt, the stronger the hold the leader will have on that person. With guilt, a cult leader can train followers to immediately stop certain thoughts and substitute other thoughts in their place, and teach them always to "think and will as the leader thinks and wills."

To ensure that critical faculties totally shut down, cult leaders keep members from any personal time during which they can reflect and evaluate what is being told them.

"Cults schedule every minute and constantly bombard potential members with information," he said. This overload forces the brain to stop processing its input, leaving the newcomer vulnerable to the suggestions and commands of the leaders.

To help with this mind programming, cults deprive members of sleep and feed them a protein-deficient diet, he said. "A low-protein diet affects the cerebral cortex in the brain and inhibits the thinking process," he said.

As a result, when recruits succumb to these pressures, they will join a cult. "But their decision is based not on choice but on a default on their part. Their conversion is an artificial and highly orchestrated experience of thought control. Since the conversion is not a result of inward reflection, it is never real."

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